



Madonna gets thumbs up from Sanskrit scholars

NEW DELHI (AP) — Madonna's new "Ray of Light" album has won approval from some Sanskrit scholars in India, despite reservations about her religious conversion. Scholars in the holy city of Varanasi, India, at the material girl's show when reciting Sanskrit mantras on her latest album "Ray of Light". However, when a group of them gathered together to watch a broadcast of Madonna's performance at the recent awards, the verdict was favourable. The Hindu deity of India (U.N.) says "Doing well," she has and even "genuine" was the expert opinion of pop star's rendering of Sanskrit mantras.

Fergie denies she is to wed Italian count

LONDON (AP) — The Duchess of York — Fergie — is not engaged, she plans to remain, her spokeswoman insisted Monday. Reports that the duchess had become the wife of an Italian count. The engaged couple, Count Gherardo and the British tabloid's page one she was ready to marry her husband, whom she has separated from for rights to enable him to marry Fergie. "This is a very wide of the mark, completely unfounded," the duchess's spokeswoman said.

Prison offers guests a glimpse behind bars

LONDON (AP) — A state-run television channel, the BBC, has shown a special programme about the prison system in the United Kingdom. The programme, which was broadcast on Monday, showed the inside of a prison and the lives of the prisoners. The programme was a success, and it was well received by the public. The programme was a success, and it was well received by the public.

Patients flee hospital over fear of blood theft

LONDON (AP) — Patients fled a hospital in Nigeria, fearing that their blood would be stolen for use in a ritual. The hospital, which was in the state of Lagos, had been the site of several such incidents in the past. The patients were afraid that their blood would be used in a ritual to harm them. The hospital was closed for several days, and the patients were eventually allowed to leave.

Harrods owner launches own site on the internet

LONDON (AP) — The owner of Harrods, John Burt Foster, has launched his own website on the internet. The website, which is called "Harrods Online", provides information about the store and its products. Foster, who is the chairman of the Harrods company, said that the website was a success, and it was well received by the public.

Iraqi leadership calls on U.N. to restore reviews of sanctions

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq called Wednesday for the U.N. Security Council to reverse its decision to suspend reviews of sanctions. In a statement issued after a meeting of the Revolutionary Command Council, chaired by President Saddam Hussein, the government said it had decided to ask the Security Council to rescind the resolution it passed on Sept. 9. The resolution condemned Iraq's decision to stop cooperating with U.N. arms inspectors as "a totally unacceptable contravention" of U.N. Security Council resolutions. It suspended the 60-day reviews of the sanctions imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait. The Revolutionary Command Council said it would implement the Iraqi parliament's recommendation to freeze the remaining U.N. monitoring of weapons sites "at a suitable time."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Volume 23 Number 6945

AMMAN THURSDAY-FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17-18, 1998, JUMADA I 26-27, 1419

Price: Jordan 200 fils

Regent and U.S. envoy review efforts to break peace deadlock

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday met the U.S. special Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross who briefed him on the outcome of his current mission in the region, which is intended to break the deadlock in the peace process.

During the meeting, attended by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, the two sides reviewed the latest efforts to achieve a breakthrough in the peace negotiations.

Prince Hassan emphasized the need for concerted efforts to overcome present obstacles to peace through the implementation of the U.S. initiative that calls for Israeli troops to withdraw from 13 per cent of the occupied West Bank.

The Regent said Jordan views the U.S. initiative as a positive step towards a breakthrough in the peace negotiations and the eventual achievement of a comprehensive and lasting peace that guarantees the rights of all parties.

Prince Hassan called on the U.S. to pursue its active role to end the crisis facing the peace process.

At a short press conference following the meeting, attended by U.S. Ambassador to Jordan William Burns, Ross said that in his meeting with the Regent and the prime minister the parties reviewed the current situation, the state of negotiations, and efforts being made by the U.S. to try to ensure that the peace process moves forward and "tangible changes on the ground can take place."



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, meets with U.S. envoy to the Middle East Dennis Ross at the Royal Palace on Wednesday (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

He said he noted in the discussions with the Crown Prince that "we've made progress in some areas, but there are still other areas in the initiative that we have

launched, where there remain differences and we have to find ways to overcome those differences. I'll continue to do that as I stay in the region for a couple of more days."

Asked in what areas there have been progress and where there was none, Ross said the U.S. has been "consistent throughout this process of never

detailing in particular items of the American initiative," adding that "there are still differences to be overcome," and he found "a real strong intent on both sides to try to find ways to overcome differences."

Ross told reporters, "One can never give up on peace, and there is a certain reality: Israelis and Palestinians are not

going any place, and there is no acceptable alternative to peace. And I think we just have to continue to work our way through the various differences that remain and hope that we can find a way forward and continue to work with the parties in the way that reflects the priority and the need for peace in the region."

Tarawneh presents policy statement to Parliament today

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh

AMMAN — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh will present his government's policy statement to Parliament today amid expectations that his cabinet will win a majority vote of confidence early next week, officials and analysts said.

Officials said the prime minister is expected to present a straight-to-the-point statement detailing his government's plans to combat poverty, unemployment, corruption, nepotism and favouritism.

The statement, based on the Royal letter of designation to the new government, was crafted after laborious consultations with the House's six parliamentary blocs — grouping around 70 of the 80 deputies — as well as with independent deputies that have helped defuse tension created by Tarawneh's failure to consult the House before forming his cabinet.

Business leaders and analysts say the government faces the tough task of pulling the country out of economic recession which threatens long-term growth prospects.

The government has before it the daunting challenge of having to reduce the budget deficit, expected to reach six per cent of GDP from an original 3.2

per cent estimate for this year.

But recent dialogues HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, started with politicians, party leaders and leading figures have eased popular tension and are expected to help Tarawneh with his reform programme.

"The concept of dialogue is a positive one," said Deputy Mohammad Abu Hdeib. "We thank the [Crown Prince] for his dialogues with the different political streams and hope that all governments will follow on this tradition, which is a duty of every government."

The recent appointment of former prime ministers Taher Masri and Ahmad Obeidat, two outspoken critics of domestic and foreign policies who joined the Islamist-led boycott of the November parliamentary elections and opposed Jordan's peace with Israel, was also received as a sign of good faith on the part of the government.

In addition to Masri and Obeidat, former ministers Marwan Dudin, Ibrahim Ghababshah, and retired army general Khalil Fanatqa were appointed to replace ministers Taher Kana'an, Jawdat Shoul, Tawfiq Kreishan, Nayef Qadi and Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani.

The resignation of the senators came after parliamentarians protested the

appointment of four senators in the new government. Deputies, however, later changed their stand, fearing that such a move would set a precedent that would prevent them from holding ministerial portfolios in the future.

But according to some deputies, the resignation of the four ministers from the Upper House is not expected to affect the upcoming vote of confidence debate.

Obtaining the vote of confidence will not be a difficult task for the cabinet, according to deputies and observers. They say that at least 52 deputies are expected to vote in favour of Tarawneh's government, formed amid people's hopes that, unlike the previous government, this one would address the urgent problems facing the Kingdom.

According to the Constitution, 41 deputies have to vote against the government for it to fall.

Deputies Khalil Haddadin, Mohammad Kouz and Abu Hdeib, however, said at this stage it is too early to predict the number of votes the government is expected to obtain.

"This all depends on the prime minister's response to the demands of the deputies, which will be evident in his policy statement," Kouz told the Jordan Times on Wednesday.

'Officials allegedly involved in water crisis to be referred to criminal court'

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The Amman prosecutor, who is looking into a government commission's report on the water contamination crisis, said on Wednesday he expects to refer the file against officials allegedly responsible for the crisis to the Amman Criminal Court.

"We expect to finish our investigations within the next two weeks," Prosecutor Mohammad Harabsheh told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

Harabsheh also confirmed the arrest of two more officials from the Water Authority. They are the water quality director, Ahmad Oleimat, and the director of central labs, Hassan Omar.

"Investigations proved they were involved in the water crisis, and they were arrested for further investigation," Harabsheh said.

He did not rule out the possibility of detaining other officials "if investigations prove that they were involved in the water crisis."

On Sept. 14, Harabsheh ordered the arrest of five employees at the Zai Water Treatment Plant for alleged negligence in managing the plant.

A special commission, formed last month to investigate the water crisis, submitted a 100-page report to the prosecutor general.

The report was never released to the public because it contained names of officials.

Western Amman was the hardest hit by the crisis which started in July when residents complained that water had a foul smell and colour.

The crisis led to the resignation of Water Minister Munther Haddadin.

The Society for Consumer Protection last month filed a lawsuit at the Amman Magistrate Court against Minister Haddadin and other officials.

The court ruled early this month that it had no power to try the minister.

According to the Constitution ministers are tried by a higher council for crimes committed while in office but only after indictment by a two-third majority of the Lower House of Parliament.

The higher council is headed by the Senate speaker and includes three senators elected by the Upper House and five judges from the Court of Cassation.

Plans to privatise national carrier appear to take off

By Ghadeer Taber

AMMAN — Plans to privatise the troubled state airline appear to finally have taken off with the initialing of agreements with a French bank and an English law firm to assist in the restructuring and eventual sale of a large stake of Royal Jordanian (RJ), industry sources said on Wednesday.

A preliminary financial advisory contract was initiated with Bank Paribas and a similar legal consultancy was initiated with Clifford Chance, one of the world's leading law firms, they added.

Both deals were initiated on Tuesday.

Privatisation of the loss-making carrier is part of a controversial government

drive to sell-off its equity in state-run enterprises, including the lucrative telecommunications company and the cement factory.

The programme, launched in 1989 as part of an economic reform plan agreed with the International Monetary Fund, has been delayed by the lack of political will on the part of successive governments concerned with public opposition to privatisation, especially of profitable firms.

The government, which has put forward an ambitious schedule for the completion of the plan, expects to be ready to sell a stake, between 40 and 60 per cent, in a new debt-free subsidiary to an international strategic partner eight months after initiating the

restructuring process.

The financial advisor would help the government implement a World Bank blueprint for privatising the airline by evaluating its assets, restructuring the balance sheet and recommending ways to handle debts and financial obligations, officials said.

Eventually the financial advisor will market the operating subsidiary that will handle the aviation part of the business, which will include the planes, routes and technical support, they said.

The remaining businesses of the airline, such as the duty free shops, engineering and maintenance services and catering, will be part of a government-owned holding company, which

will represent the government's share in the new subsidiary.

In order to set up the subsidiary, the legal advisor, will help the government change the regulatory framework which grants RJ a state monopoly under Law 10.

In addition to reorganising the sector, Clifford Chance, which bid along with seven other firms for the contract, will also focus on the airline's legal liabilities, establishing new relationships with civil authorities and other third parties.

According to officials, the World Bank will finance a portion — yet to be determined — of the financial advisory services.

Five global investment banks responded to RJ's

invitation last March to submit bids to act as financial advisor to help privatise the airline, straddled with nearly JD700 million of debts, mainly to international banks and the Jordan Petroleum Company.

The government, which is expected to absorb a major chunk of the debt, began negotiating with U.S. commercial banking giant Citibank in June.

Industry insiders described the offer by Citibank, which as specified by the terms of reference entered into the deal as part of a consortium of financial and aviation experts, as the most competitive and attractive by far with a zero success fee and a \$1.2 retainer fee. But talks fell through after the

two sides could not agree on several points, mainly on the issue of indemnity.

Citibank, which is advising one of the two company's bidding for a 40 per cent stake in the Jordan Telecommunication Corporation, did not agree to be legally obliged for liabilities incurred by other members of the consortium.

Bank Paribas, which has asked for a 0.95 per cent success fee once the sale of the stake in the subsidiary goes through, has accepted this condition.

While some industry sources criticised the government for being too rigid in negotiating with Citibank, RJ insiders said that the terms of reference reflected what was in the best interest of the airline.

Kingdom switches to winter time on Friday

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN — Jordan on Friday will switch to winter time when clocks will be set one hour back amid suggestions that the practice of having a daylight-saving summer time be abolished.

The Ministry of Energy prepared a feasibility study on the annual practice showing that time switching does not save as much energy as was expected.

The study showed that during the summer season the entire country's electricity usage is trimmed by less than one per cent, said Ahmad Bashir, Ministry of Energy secretary general.

"Time switching is not feasible for us," said Bashir, adding that the ministry will submit its report on the study to the Cabinet along with recommendations to review the benefits, if any, of applying daylight-saving

time.

A major reason for changing time that it is believed to save energy. Energy use and the demand for electricity for lighting homes is directly connected to when Jordanians go to sleep and when they wake up. Bedtime for most is late evening throughout the year. When people go to bed, they turn off the lights and television.

In the average home, around 25 per cent of all the electricity consumed is for lighting and small appliances, such as TVs, video cassette recorders and stereos.

A good percentage of energy consumed by lighting and appliances occurs in the evening when families are home. By moving the clock ahead one hour, Jordan can cut on electricity consumption.

Summer time saves energy in the morning when people rise. The

majority of Jordanians wake up before 7:00 a.m. during the work and school week. Because the sun is up, people will turn on fewer lights in their homes. Thus, people actually use less energy in the morning, argues Ali Muhajer, a school teacher.

Additionally, according to the police, more lives are saved in summer because traffic accidents are less likely to occur because more people travel home from work and school in daylight.

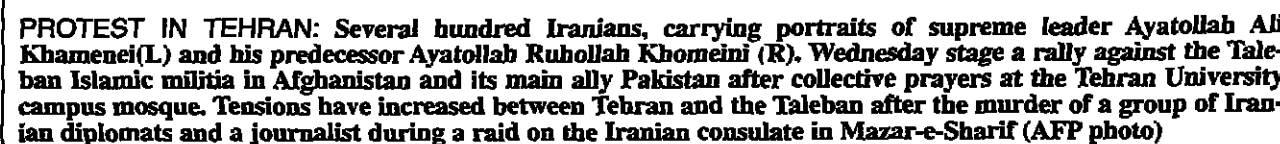
Other parts of the world observe daylight savings time as well. European nations have been taking advantage of the time change for decades. In 1996 the European Union (EU) standardised a EU-wide "summer period." The EU version of daylight-saving time runs from the last Sunday in March through the last Sunday in October.



Moderate Iranian paper banned

Also in the U.N. team were former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Donald McHenry; former Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral; former Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul-Karim Kabariti; Kenyan Attorney General Amos Wako; and former French Health Minister Simone Veil.

the support enjoyed by Tutsis who backed him when he launched his campaign to overthrow Mobutu.



of the ancient Temple, the Western Wall which supports the raised mosque compound known to Jews as the Temple Mount, is today the holiest site in Judaism.

Rabbi Dov Lior of the Kiryat Arba settlement near Hebron insisted that rebuilding the Temple "would be for the good of all Jews and

Israel, which has controlled parts of southern Lebanon since it invaded it in 1978, has occupied a self-declared security zone along the border since 1985 to prevent potential attacks into Israel. Lebanese guerrillas are fighting to drive them out.

FLIGHTS

17:30	..... London (RJ)
18:45	..... Kuwait (RJ)
19:05	..... Doha (RJ)
19:10	..... Athens (RJ)
19:20	..... Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:45	..... Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
23:55	..... Larnaca (RJ)
Other Flights	
08:55	..... Dubai (EK)
11:00	..... Kuwait (KU)
13:00	..... Riyadh (SV)
14:10	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:10	..... Sharjah (AH)
15:40	..... Doha (QR)
18:40	..... Beirut (ME)
19:00	..... Paris (AF)
20:25	..... Tel Aviv (LY)
21:00	..... Cairo (MS)
21:10	..... London (BA)
23:20	..... Istanbul (TK)
23:35	..... Larnaca (CY)
00:05	..... Moscow (SU)
01:15	..... Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
04:20	..... Tunis (TU)
05:20	..... Antalya (TK)
Royal Wings (RW)	
(For Thursday and Friday)	
10:20	Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)
18:00	Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport on Thursday and Friday) (RW)
20:20	..... Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA on Friday only), (RW)
22:35	Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA on Thursday only) (RW)
23:25	Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights	
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Khamenei, in a meeting with Revolutionary Guards commanders, accused "certain newspapers" of caving in to a "creeping Western cultural onslaught ... targeting people's faith, Islam and the [1979 Islamic] revolution."

Paintings by R. Salim Al-Bandak at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman (until Sept. 30).
* Exhibition of "rough" furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al-Bandak at the Theater Hall.



Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh Wednesday meets with officials from the Anti-Corruption Department (Petra photo)

Prime minister pledges new government will fight corruption

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh Wednesday emphasised that his government will combat corruption in accordance with the Royal directives in the letter of designation to the new government.

Tarawneh said the government will provide support to the Anti-Corruption Department, which is run by the security services, to enable it to pursue its national mission.

The prime minister was speaking during a visit to the Anti-Corruption Department, where he conveyed His Majesty King Hussein's appreciation of the department's officials for their role in protecting the state treasury and public funds.

In his letter of designation to Tarawneh, King Hussein said "good employees should be rewarded, but those failing in their duties and neglecting responsibilities or the corrupt amongst them and those who betray trust should be punished. As much as the nation needs to honour and reward the distinguished people in recognition of their endeavours, it must equally strike out at the negligent and the indifferent and those who do not give any regard to their duties."

Tarawneh, who was accompanied on the visit by Minister of State for Prime

Ministry Affairs Samih Bino and Minister of Interior Nayef Qadi, praised the department's officials for working to prevent infringements on the national interests and Jordan's credibility before the world.

At the beginning of the meeting, Tarawneh listened to a briefing about the department's duties and its future plans.

The head of the Lower House Committee on Water and Agriculture, Salameh Hajar, said fish which were released to get rid of algae in the water, as a natural method ordered recently by Minister of Water and Energy Hani Mulki, might pollute the water with their refuse or if they die.

"This will not solve the problem," Hajar told the Jordan Times. "In order to efficiently solve the problem, the government has to stop pumping Lake Tiberias water. And instead of expanding the Zai plant, it must be rehabilitated and maintained."

Hajar added that the committee will meet with the ministers of water and health on Saturday to discuss the issue.

Water expert and former assistant to the Water Authority secretary general, Raja Jodeon, said fish

Sister of accused teen murderer refuses to drop charges at trial

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — In emotional testimony Wednesday at the Criminal Court, the sister of a 19-year-old standing trial on charges of murdering 11 members of his family member and a life-long friend refused to drop charges against her brother.

"If my brother did it, then he should be punished," sobbed Itaf Qashash, 37, after the court tribunal asked her if she wished to drop the charges pressed by the prosecution against her brother, Sa'ed Qashash.

The accused, who faces 12 counts of premeditated murder, confessed to killing his mother, father, other family members and his schoolmate Atta Sh'alun on June 10, because they were harassing him about his academic performance.

Itaf Qashash, who wept throughout her 10-minute

testimony, said Sa'ed came to her house to pick up one of his sisters "because our mother wanted her to run some errands with him."

"Sa'ed seemed to be in a hurry but was acting normally," she told a packed court room.

In response to a question posed by the court, the woman, a teacher in Jabal Manarah, said "my brother never had any problems with his family."

Aref Sh'alun, 40, Atta's father, also refused to drop charges against the defendant.

"I saw Sa'ed on Thursday and asked him if he knew of my son's whereabouts. He denied seeing him," he said.

Sh'alun, who was testifying for the prosecution, added: "I noticed that Sa'ed was smoking expensive cigarettes and had bought expensive

cologne, two things I know he cannot afford to buy."

The witness said he became suspicious of Sa'ed because he knew his son had left his house the previous evening, "and because my son, who works in the construction field, had approximately JD140 on him, I called the police."

Another prosecution witness, Ibrahim Mohammad, an Egyptian construction worker, said a youth came to him on Wednesday, June 10, and bought 25 bricks.

"I tried to give him back his change, but he asked me to keep it because he was in a hurry," Mohammad said.

The victims of the June 10 slayings in the Bnyat village south of Amman were Qashash's mother Tharayah, 50, his father Amin, 57, his sisters Karimah, 25, Mirvat, 17, Wafa, 9, and Insaf, 27, Insaf's 30-year-old hus-

band, Jamal Turk, 30, and their two children, Hala, 2, and Zaid, 3, as well as his brothers Mohammad, 30 and Mustafa, 17.

After his lawyer tried to get the court's permission to have his client psychologically examined, Qashash said he was mentally competent and not guilty of the charges.

According to the prosecution charge sheet, the defendant lured the victims one after the other to the basement of the family's house and shot each of them while they had their backs to him, then piled their bodies and sealed the basement's doors with bricks and cement.

The court tribunal, presided over by Judge Mohammad Ajameh and including Mifteh Mubeidin and Issa Hamdan, postponed the case to Sept. 21 to hear more prosecution witnesses.

House committee criticises new water quality control method

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — A parliamentary committee on Wednesday criticised the government's recent measures to clean the waterways leading to the Zai Water Treatment Plant, saying they are "inefficient and might cause pollution."

The head of the Lower House Committee on Water and Agriculture, Salameh Hajar, said fish which were released to get rid of algae in the water, as a natural method ordered recently by Minister of Water and Energy Hani Mulki, might pollute the water with their refuse or if they die.

"This will not solve the problem," Hajar told the Jordan Times. "In order to efficiently solve the problem, the government has to stop pumping Lake Tiberias water. And instead of expanding the Zai plant, it must be rehabilitated and maintained."

Hajar added that the committee will meet with the ministers of water and health on Saturday to discuss the issue.

Water expert and former assistant to the Water Authority secretary general, Raja Jodeon, said fish

are used as indicators for pollution and not as treatment.

"The pre-treatment stage, through efficient monitoring and controlling of water coming in and going out of the plant, must be conducted to solve the problem," he said. "More adjustments should be made to the plant's systems and pipes in order to correctly deal with algae and other substances."

Jodeon added that during the water treatment process, providing oxygen is a must to get rid of some kinds of toxic algae.

"Cleaning, ventilating and maintaining the Zai plant's pipes is essential to removing any remains which might have been left after the water crisis," the water expert said.

Health Minister Nael Ajlouni affirmed that water coming from the Zai plant is fit for human consumption.

But he added that "for precautionary reasons, I do not want to cancel the previous decision of boiling water before drinking, especially during the summer."

Meanwhile, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz yesterday

reported that some Israeli officials complained that "the quality of water in Lake Tiberias could deteriorate seriously if work goes ahead — as part of the agreement with Jordan — on plans for the diversion of the Yarmouk River into the lake and for the diversion of the northern Jordan River tributary directly into [Israel's] national water carrier."

"This warning is being sounded by officials in the ministries of agriculture and environmental affairs as well as senior water quality experts. They claim that the water of Lake Tiberias could become more saline and that there would be a flourishing of poisonous seaweed that could pose a threat to one of Israel's most important water sources," said Ha'aretz.

Earlier this week, Mulki said he met with Israeli officials to discuss constructing a diversionary dam on the Yarmouk River providing 135 million cubic metres of water per year to ensure Jordan's water share as stipulated in the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

Deputy House Speaker Shreideh submits resignation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputy Lower House Speaker Youssef Shreideh has resigned from his post and from Parliament's permanent bureau but has said he will run for the post of House speaker during the next ordinary session, expected in November.

The local press quoted Shreideh on Wednesday as saying that the resignation was in protest against the actions of House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour, whom he alleged has been sending parliamentary delegations on visits abroad without consulting with the permanent bureau as per regulations.

He cited delegation visits to Moscow to attend the meetings of the International Parliamentary Union and to the Palestinian territories as examples of decisions Srour made without consulting the bureau. He added that the deputies learnt about the visits through the local press.

Shreideh said he would only withdraw his resignation if the situation were rectified and the bureau allowed to shoulder its duties concerning supervision of the House's administration, such as deciding on financial matters and sending official delegations abroad.

On his House speaker-ship bid, Shreideh said he will be nominated by his parliamentary coalition for the post.

For his part, Srour was quoted as saying that every deputy has the right to run for the post of speaker in the coming ordinary session and wished Shreideh success.

Shreideh's resignation will be formally submitted to the House in its first meeting and if accepted, a new deputy speaker will be elected to replace him. House regulations state that even in an extraordinary session, a deputy speaker can be elected if his post is vacant when Parliament convenes.

Parliament is scheduled to convene today in an extraordinary session to submit a vote of confidence in the new government. Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh is expected to present the government's policy statement for debate before voting takes place.

what's going on

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL

"Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:

* Film entitled "Willem de Kooning — Strokes of Genius" on Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sabih Hajar at the Main House.

* Works by Iraqi artist Samir Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.

* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.

* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'sh at the Museum.

* Exhibition of photographs "Plates of Gold" and "Arab" at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday and Friday respectively at 8:00 p.m. (Another film entitled "Azizah" will be screened on Saturday Sept. 19 at 8:00 p.m.).

* Two films entitled "Plates of Gold" and "Arab" at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday and Friday respectively at 8:00 p.m. (Another film entitled "Azizah" will be screened on Saturday Sept. 19 at 8:00 p.m.).

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NATO faces growing pressure to intervene in troubled Kosovo

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The momentum towards western military intervention in Kosovo appeared to be gathering pace on Wednesday as fighting in the province continued, worsening an already desperate refugee crisis.

German Defence Minister Volker Ruehe warned that the West could resort to force "within three to five weeks," echoing comments made last week by a senior U.S. official here.

Britain and France meanwhile briefed their NATO allies on the terms of a planned U.N. Security Council resolution which would represent a step towards military action if President Slobodan Milosevic fails to end the onslaught against Kosovo's ethnic Albanian population.

The resolution, to be presented in New York within days, will set out a list of actions Milosevic must take to end the conflict, a NATO official said.

It will not "explicitly authorise military action," by the alliance if Milosevic fails to comply but it will constitute an "essential building block" towards the use of force, the official said.

The official was speaking on condition of anonymity after the 16 ambassadors reviewed the situation in Kosovo with U.S. special envoy Christopher Hill, who is attempting to negotiate a peace deal in the province.

Hill expressed very cautious optimism about the prospects of his mediation attempts succeeding. "There are a tremendous number of problems ahead but we do at least have a process aimed in the right direction, even if it is not going at the speed we all would like."

He warned however that, with winter approaching and huge numbers of people having been forced to flee their homes, "time is running out" for a negotiated settlement.

Milosevic's onslaught in Kosovo has created more than 270,000 refugees, humanitarian agencies say.

Hill is to return to Kosovo's capital Pristina on Thursday in an attempt to secure the written agreement of the leaders of the ethnic Albanian community to a framework interim agreement on the province's future.

The visit will be the first step in a new round of shuttle diplomacy between Pristina and the Yugoslav capital Belgrade.

The NATO official said the British-French resolution reflected a "refocusing" of the international community's attention on the situation in Kosovo in the light of the "wanton destruction" of Kosovar villages by the Serbian security forces.

"The longer these actions go on, the greater the likelihood is that the international community is going to run out of patience with President Milosevic," the official said.

"If it becomes clear that the use of military force is necessary to stop [Serbian] military action or to boost the diplomatic process, NATO stands fully ready."

NATO last week completed military planning for possible intervention in Kosovo. The most plausible option is that of limited air strikes by Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Twenty-five targets in Kosovo and the rest of Serbia have already been identified by the U.S. army.

But there are doubts about the political will of the allies to resort to force.

Such an option which could face Russian objections as well as possibly bolstering demands for Kosovo to be made independent — which the West has so far refused to support.

Air Force General John Jumper, the commander of U.S. air forces in Europe, said on Tuesday that U.S. leaders were unconvinced air strikes would succeed in stopping the fighting as they did in Bosnia in 1995.

Ruehe however insisted Yugoslavia must stop its crackdown on civilians in Kosovo or face military action.

"Western countries are ever more ready to stop attacks against civilians by military means within three to five weeks if they are pursued," by Belgrade forces, he told ZDF television late Tuesday.

"Nobody has the right to shell civilian populations using tanks and artillery."

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COCA GROWERS DEMONSTRATE IN LA PAZ: Coca leaf farmers block a street Tuesday in La Paz during a march which paralysed traffic for several hours. Coca farmers have been demonstrating in the Bolivian capital for 13 days against the government's drug programme to eradicate coca fields in the El Chapare central region. Coca leaves are used to produce cocaine (AFP photo)

Clinton, Havel meet in midst of scandal

WASHINGTON (R) — Under fire for his affair with Monica Lewinsky, President Bill Clinton on Wednesday won a warm endorsement from Czech President Vaclav Havel, one of the moral beacons of Eastern Europe's liberation from Communism.

Havel, the revered former playwright who led the "velvet revolution" that toppled Czechoslovakia's Communist government without violence in 1989, met Clinton in the midst of a drama as strange as anything he ever dreamed up for the stage.

Clinton and Havel's White House talks were expected to focus on the Czech Republic's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation next year, a milestone that will seal its integration into the West after decades of Soviet domination.

But the main topic of conversation in Washington was not global security, but domestic politics and whether Clinton will face impeachment hearings over his affair with the former White House intern and his efforts to conceal it.

Havel, who nearly died from complications following surgery to remove a colostomy bag in late July, also thanked Clinton warmly for his push to extend the Western security alliance to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

For his part, Clinton paid homage to the Czech president for his unwavering opposition to Communism, which brought him years in prison as he fought Czechoslovakia's

Soviet-backed rulers.

"Your remarkable life embodies a great lesson: that people who love their country can change it, even against tremendous odds," Clinton said. "That words can be powerful instruments of change and that together, words and deeds, can be the pillars of freedom."

Clinton's words and deeds are under the harshest scrutiny in Congress, which is studying independent counsel Kenneth Starr's 445-page report on his affair with Lewinsky and which alleges that he committed 11 potentially impeachable offences.

The top legislators in Clinton's own Democratic party — Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt of Missouri — this week urged the president to abandon his narrow legal defence that he did not commit perjury when asked about the affair under oath.

Clinton insists he told the truth when he denied a sexual relationship with Lewinsky based on the legal argument that that and similar terms refer to intercourse, not oral sex.

His lawyers deny that he committed any impeachable acts.

In an effort to limit media access to Clinton on Wednesday, the White House barred reporters from a photo session at the start of his meeting with Havel and said it would restrict the number of questions at a news conference afterwards.

Meanwhile, the Republicans who control Congress are pushing to release videotape of Clinton's Aug. 17 grand jury testimony in which he first admitted to an improper, sexual relationship with Lewinsky.

Their hope is that if Americans see Clinton's denials on television, they will cease to support him.

According to a New York Times/CBS poll published Wednesday, while 66 per cent of Americans said Clinton did not share their moral standards, a steady 62 per cent approved of the job he is doing.

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In an effort to limit media access to Clinton on Wednesday, the White House barred reporters from a photo session at the start of his meeting with Havel and said it would restrict the number of questions at a news conference afterwards.

Meanwhile, the Republicans who control Congress are pushing to release videotape of Clinton's Aug. 17 grand jury testimony in which he first admitted to an improper, sexual relationship with Lewinsky.

Their hope is that if Americans see Clinton's denials on television, they will cease to support him.

According to a New York Times/CBS poll published Wednesday, while 66 per cent of Americans said Clinton did not share their moral standards, a steady 62 per cent approved of the job he is doing.

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Austria requests extradition of former Carlos ally

VIENNA (R) — Austria said on Wednesday it had formally requested the extradition from France of a former ally of guerrilla mastermind Carlos the Jackal for his part in the 1975 kidnapping of OPEC ministers in Vienna.

A spokesman for the Vienna Criminal Court said it had asked France to hand over German national Hans-Joachim Klein, 50, who was arrested last week in northern France where he had been living under an assumed name.

The request was made at the weekend, the spokesman said. "The extradition request was made in connection with the OPEC attack," he said without specifying the charges.

Germany on Tuesday sought the extradition of Klein, who is wanted in Germany for three counts of murder and kidnapping in connection with the 1975 attack in Vienna.

The kidnapping, in which two security guards and a delegation member were killed, was Carlos's most notorious attack. Klein suffered a serious stomach wound, but was treated and allowed to fly to Algiers with Carlos, his other accomplices and their hostages.

Investigators say they lost track of him after that, but that they believed he had taken refuge in Libya.

It was the only guerrilla attack Klein ever took part in. Two years later he announced he had become frightened by Carlos's ruthlessness. He defected from the guerrilla group and, in a dramatic parting gesture, sent his pistol to Germany's Der Spiegel magazine along with details of other planned assassinations.

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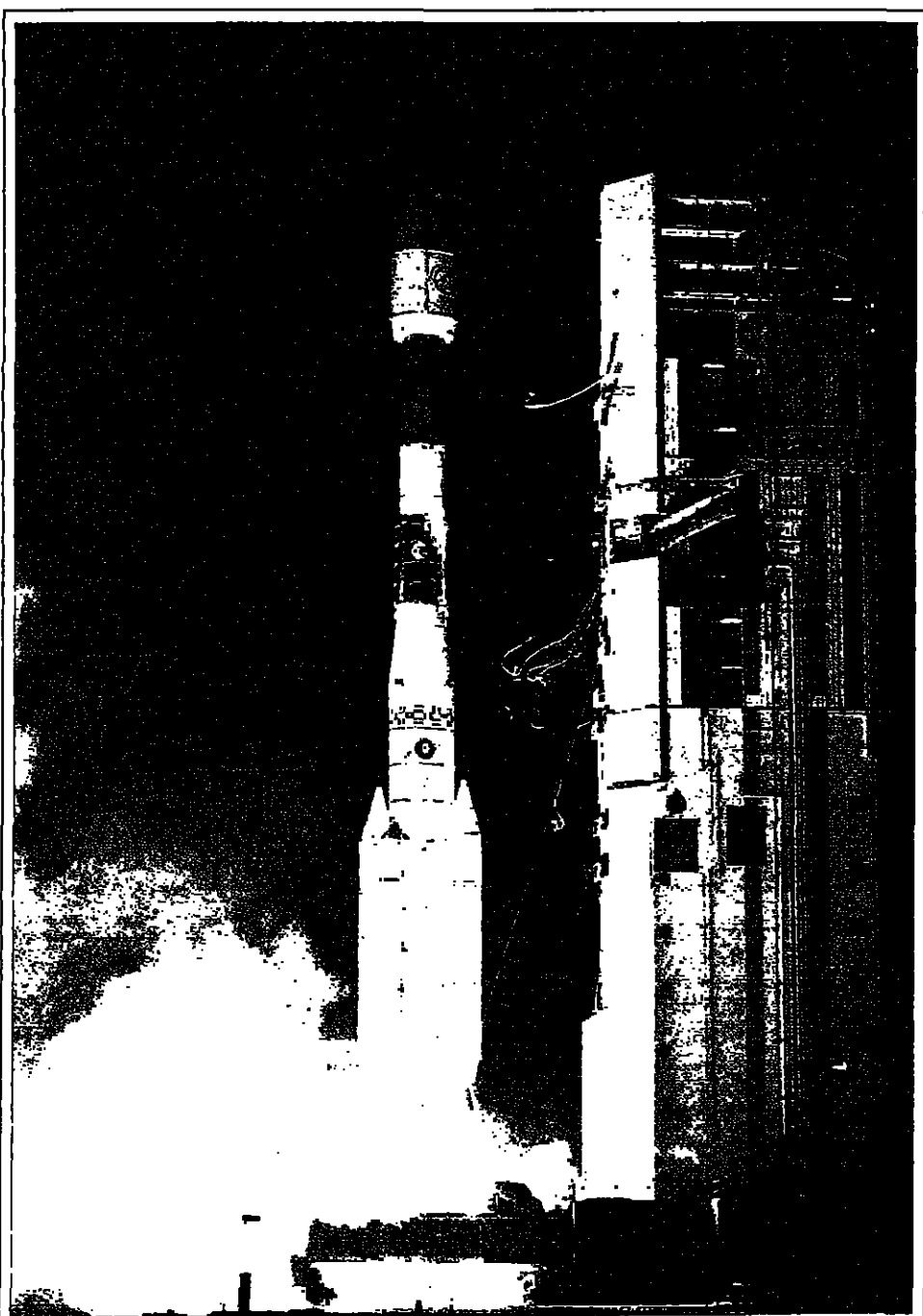
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NEW ROCKET LIFTS OFF: The 110th European Ariane rocket takes off from the launch pad early Wednesday from the Kourou space center in French Guiana. The rocket placed a U.S. telecommunications PAS-7 satellite in orbit over the Indian Ocean (Reuters photo)

Museveni says Uganda troops to stay in Congo

KAMPALA (R) — Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said Wednesday his troops would stay in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure Ugandan security and prevent the threat of genocide.

But Museveni, speaking to members of parliament and diplomats in the Ugandan capital, stopped short of saying Ugandan troops were fighting alongside rebels who rose up against President Laurent Kabila on August 2.

"We are in the Congo primarily for our security," Museveni said. "We have not taken part in the Congo crisis — yet. We are just watching. If we do go in it will be because the region has failed to solve our security concerns."

"Our involvement in the Congo indirectly last year and a bit more directly now is a result of our security concerns and the risk of rebels in the area... that is why our army should stay in

the Congo until there is a regionally agreed modus vivendi on how to live together," he said.

It was the first time Museveni had publicly admitted Ugandan involvement in Congo. Kabila accuses Rwanda and Uganda of supporting the rebels. Rwanda denies it has troops in Congo.

State media have reported Museveni's acknowledgment to MPs that Uganda held several air bases in the east of the country.

Since last year the country has deployed two battalions in the Congo to fight Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces rebels.

The Ugandan government faces two separate rebel movements.

The Lord's Resistance Army has opposed Museveni for over a decade, while two years ago the ADF sprung up in the west of the country using bases on

the western side of the Rwenzori mountains in eastern Congo.

Museveni said Ugandan involvement in the war that ousted Mobutu Sese Seko and brought Kabila in May 1997 to power stemmed from the need to avert the possibility of genocide.

Mobutu's government refused to recognise as citizens ethnic Tutsi Banyarunges in the east of the country and sponsored a wave of persecution against them prior to Kabila's revolt.

Museveni said that persecution, linked to Hutu extremists residing in Zaire, threatened to become a genocide.

Anti-U.S. protests mark anniversary of Philippine bases rejection

MANILA (AP) — Leftist demonstrators marked Wednesday's anniversary of the rejection of U.S. military bases seven years ago by protesting a proposal to allow U.S. war exercises in the Philippines.

Hundreds of rain-drenched protesters gathered at the U.S. Embassy to protest the proposed Visiting Forces Agreement.

Protest leaders said President Clinton's own deceptions about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky show that the U.S. government cannot be trusted. One demonstrator wearing a Monica Lewinsky mask used a giant pair of scissors to cut a mock missile being held at the groin by another protester wearing a Clinton mask and an Uncle Sam hat.

The embassy, where police have tightened security since the bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, has been the site of almost daily protests against the proposed agreement since last week.

On Friday, police scuffled with members of the left-wing League of Filipino Students, who tried to throw plastic bags filled with red paint at the U.S. government emblem at the embassy's gate.

Heavy rains did little to stop Wednesday's peaceful protests, which drew hundreds of demonstrators from nearby provinces. Police blocked two groups of demonstrators totalling about 5,000 who attempted to march to the Malacanang presidential palace later in the afternoon.

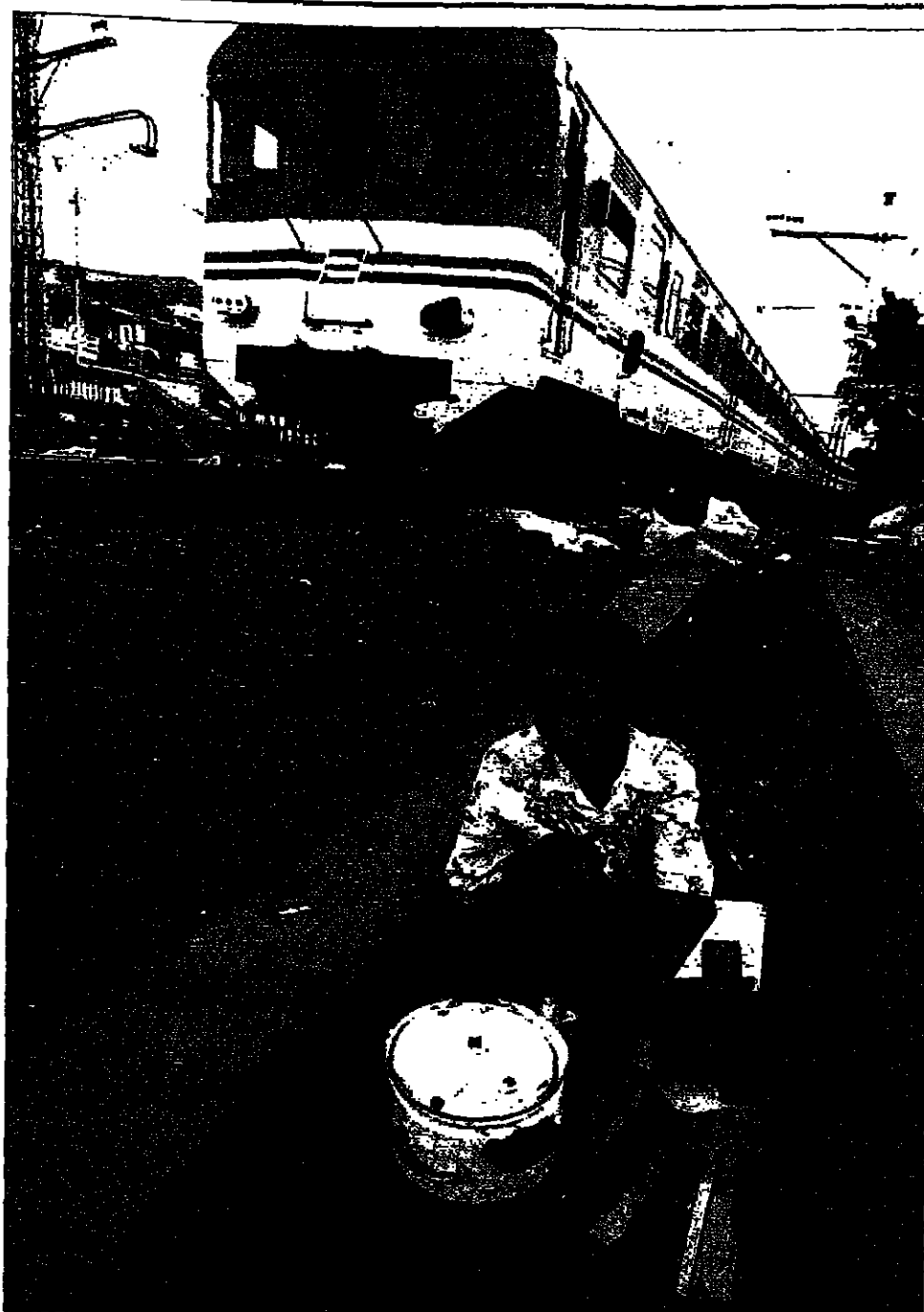
The demonstrators held separate rallies denouncing the agreement and President Joseph Estrada's support for it.

They occupied a major intersection and tied up traffic for about a kilometre around the palace, but dispersed without incident. Thousands joined similar rallies in 13 other cities around the country.

Estrada was one of the senators in 1991 who voted against a treaty that would have extended the lease on the last U.S. military base in the Philippines, at Subic Bay. A year later, the Americans left Subic, ending nearly a century of U.S. military presence in this former American colony.

Estrada says he voted against the treaty seven years ago to uphold Philippine sovereignty but is now supporting the agreement and closer security ties with the United States to ensure the country's security.

The VFA, which was signed in January by senior officials but still must be approved by the Philippine Senate, would provide legal protection to U.S. soldiers on duty in the Philippines.



An Indonesian woman Wednesday cooks a cat in a pot by a railway track where she lives with her family in one of Jakarta's slum areas. Prices of essential goods soared with the country's economic crisis, leaving some 17.1 million families facing food shortages nationwide (AFP photo)

Suharto probe team assembled, riots spread

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia announced on Wednesday it would investigate the wealth of former president Suharto as protests and rioting spread throughout the increasingly impoverished country of 200 million people.

The government has set up a team to probe Suharto's personal wealth and the wealth of those linked to him, Attorney General Muhammad Ghalib told reporters.

The investigation will be headed by Ghalib who last week told reporters that as a former president, Suharto could not have been lying when he denied squirreling away a fortune in overseas banks.

Some estimates say that Suharto and his family amassed up to \$30 billion during his 32-year autocratic rule which came to an abrupt end in May amid economic collapse and violent protest.

Suharto has been mostly out of the public eye since his downfall on May 21 but just over a week ago made a rare appearance on a television station — partly-owned by his daughter — to deny accusations he had stashed a fortune overseas.

"The people want a clarification of this matter and so does Suharto," said Ghalib, chief military prosecutor during former general Suharto's rule.

Austrian newspapers say a \$7 billion increase in bank deposits there in the first quarter of 1998 could be partly due to the Suharto family moving wealth out of Indonesia.

Several of his relatives and closest associates have already been questioned by Jakarta police, though no charges have yet been made.

The Suharto family built up huge business empires that have long dominated the Indonesian economy, though Suharto always denied accusations of nepotism and corruption.

However, since his downfall government departments have cancelled several contracts with companies linked to Suharto's family, saying graft had been involved.

"Corruption, collusion, nepotism" — known locally by its Indonesian acronym of KKN — has become the rallying call of an growing number of protests around the country over surging prices of basic commodities.

Rice prices have risen three-fold in the past year, putting the staple increasingly out of the reach of ordinary Indonesians as the country's economic crisis throws millions into a life of abject poverty.

Industry officials say that though there is enough rice in the country, a poor infrastructure, speculators and graft have hampered supplies and increased prices.

In the latest violence, a mob of 900 people in the island of Sumatra went on the rampage after a road accident involving

an ethnic-Chinese and an indigenous Indonesian. Police said 400 houses were set on fire in the town of Bagansiapi-api, on the eastern coast of Sumatra some 1,100 km northwest of Jakarta.

Ethnic-Chinese Indonesians, the country's most successful minority group, have been the frequent target of attacks around the country.

In a protest in Jakarta, at least 200 supporters of opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputra were stopped by police from marching to parliament.

Last week, students staged a series of protests against President B.J. Habibie, calling for him to step down if he did not solve the problem of inflation.

Indonesia, facing its worst economic crisis for 30 years, has been pledged \$47.4 billion in an international package to help it back on what is likely to be a long road to recovery.

The Indonesian rupiah has fallen some 80 percent against the dollar, while inflation is running at around 70 percent.

Most of the country's listed companies are technically bankrupt and analysts said the economic crisis is certain to deteriorate as firms close and millions more lose their jobs.

Cambodian opposition to attend parliament, rules out coalition

SIEM REAP (AFP) — Cambodian opposition leader Prince Norodom Ranariddh announced Wednesday his party will not boycott the new parliament, but ruled out forming a coalition with his bitter rival, Hun Sen.

"We have the honour but not the pleasure to tell you that after listening to the king we have agreed to attend the National Assembly," FUNCINPEC leader Prince Ranariddh told reporters following a meeting with his father, King Norodom Sihanouk.

But signalling that the country's political deadlock was far from over, he said a coalition government with Hun Sen's ruling Cambodian People's Party was "still a very, very long way away."

"His majesty the king advised us that the best way is to attend the session of the new National Assembly and we agree with that," he said. "The formation of a government was not discussed."

Prince Ranariddh said his reluctant and partial climb-down had been "to stop the bloodshed of the Cambodian people," referring to weeks of unrest and clashes in the capital Phnom Penh.

At least three people were killed and several others seriously injured in clashes between riot police and government supporters on one side and opposition demonstrators on the other.

The crackdown followed two weeks of escalating protests against Hun Sen and a grenade attack on the strongman's unoccupied Phnom Penh residence which he blamed on protest leaders.

"We are now entering into a new pace of negotiations which are fresh and not confrontational," Prince Ranariddh said at the end of hours of talks between the king and 13 FUNCINPEC officials in this historic northern town.

In the past the prince threatened to boycott the parliamentary opening session — scheduled for Sept. 24 — alleging Hun Sen's CPP had won the July 26 elections through fraud and intimidation.

The CPP won a majority of the 122-seat assembly but not the two-thirds needed to govern alone.

While the agreement not to boycott the National Assembly averts one constitutional crisis, another stumbling block looms with the opposition still turning down offers to form a coalition with Hun Sen and leaving the country facing a future without a government.

Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh were co-premiers in the last government which emerged from the UN-sponsored polls in 1993. But the prince was toppled when Hun Sen ousted him amid bloody fighting in July 1997.

The parries of Prince Ranariddh and fellow opposition leader Sam Rainsy refused to accept the result of the latest election — judged "free, fair and credible" by international observers — and have accused Hun Sen of fraud.

The opposition still maintain two technical demands — the reconciliation of ballot papers and a new formula on seat allocation to boost their number of MPs.

A statement from Sam Rainsy's self-named party said he would fly to Siem Reap to meet the monarch on Thursday, while FUNCINPEC officials here said Sam Rainsy was expected to follow his current political allies.

Sam Rainsy has been holed up in the United Nations Secretary General's Representative office in the centre of Phnom Penh since seeking refuge on September 7 after the grenade attack.

"It is the informed opinion of the Sam Rainsy Party that Rainsy would be at grave risk if he were to leave the office for any reason other than a meeting with the king," the statement said.

He had slept on a sofa in the UN office for the last nine days and was accompanied by UN officials even for trips to the toilet, located just three paces from the office.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

'Pakistan won't sign treaty under sanctions'

ISLAMABAD (R) — Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz said on Wednesday that Pakistan would not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) while under economic sanctions for conducting nuclear weapons tests in May. He made the comments as Pakistan began formal negotiations with a team from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on resuming a suspended \$1.56 billion structural adjustment loan and a possible new balance of payments support package. Speaking to parliament, Aziz said the economic sanctions were "unwarranted and unjustified," and demanded that they be lifted immediately. The joint sitting of the national assembly and senate was called specifically to discuss whether or not Pakistan should sign the CTBT to have the economic sanctions lifted. But Aziz insisted that Pakistan would not sign the treaty under the threat of the economic sanctions, which the government says may force the country to declare a moratorium on its \$30 billion debt unless hard cash flows are restored.

'India, Pakistan exaggerated tests'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Both India and Pakistan exaggerated the size and number of nuclear weapons they detonated in separate tests earlier this year, the Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday. Quoting the findings of an independent study, the newspaper reported that the two South Asian rivals overstated the power of their atomic bombs by a factor of four. Two of the nuclear tests India claimed may not have taken place at all and only two of the explosions Pakistan announced actually involved atomic bombs, the Times reported. "This is quite clearly a case where governments tested for a political reason rather than scientific reasons, so we have to be suspicious of what they say," said Terry Wallace of the University of Arizona, an expert on the use of seismology to analyse nuclear explosions. Wallace's study was published Wednesday in Seismological Research Letters. His work, believed to be the first independent scientific accounting of the tests, was based on seismic shock waves released by the explosions.

U.N. alarm over Cambodian detainees

PHNOM PENH (AP) — A top U.N. human rights official expressed concern Wednesday over arrests, disappearances and discoveries of bodies in and around Cambodia's capital since a recent government crackdown on opposition protesters. "During the past week at least two people have been killed in demonstrations, while the bodies of 16 others have been found floating in rivers, in irrigation ditches, and in shallow graves around the capital," said a written statement from Thomas Hammarberg. The two-page statement from Hammarberg, the United Nations special representative for human rights in Cambodia, said many of the bodies had signs of torture or other violence, including bullet wounds and strangulation marks. "Several of the bodies had their hands tied behind their backs and were gagged and blindfolded," he said. While the U.N.'s human rights office in the capital had examined just four bodies, it had detailed descriptions from multiple witnesses of 12 others, including three women and two people in the clothing of Buddhist monks, Hammarberg wrote.

'Spies arrested at Dalai Lama's compound'

CHANDIGARH (AP) — Two men believed to be Chinese spies who had detailed information on the Dalai Lama's security arrangements have been arrested at the seat of the Tibetan leader's government-in-exile in northern India, police said Wednesday. The men, identified only by their first names as Chomphol, 29, and Migmar, 30, were arrested late on Tuesday with maps, sketches and other documents related to the multi-layered security ring thrown around the Dalai Lama by Indian forces. Superintendent of Police K.C. Sadyal said by telephone from Kangra town in northern Himachal Pradesh state. In Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment on the arrests. Sadyal said Chomphol had sketches of an area closed to tourists and pilgrims where the Dalai Lama lives.

Powerful typhoon kills two in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — A powerful typhoon packing fierce winds and heavy rain struck Japan Wednesday, killing two people, injuring 16, tearing down bridges and triggering many landslides, officials said. Typhoon Siella, the first of the season to hit the Japanese archipelago, reached the main island of Honshu early in the day and moved northeast at 45 kilometres an hour, the meteorological agency said. The National Police Agency said at least 16 people were injured in Tokyo and five other prefectures and 1,690 houses were flooded due to the heavy rain. The storm washed away two bridges and caused 75 landslides, police said. The typhoon brought heavy rains in Tokyo and Japan's central region, with winds of up to 108 kilometres an hour, the meteorological agency said. Police in the central prefecture of Shizuoka, where the typhoon made landfall, said two people were injured after being hit by a high wave. Most other injuries were blamed on broken glass.

Austria requests extradition of former Carlos ally

VIENNA (R) — Austria said Wednesday it had formally requested the extradition from France of a former ally of Carlos, the mastermind of the 1980 kidnapping of OPEC ministers in Vienna.

A spokesman for the Vienna Criminal Court said it had asked France to hand over a man, national Hans-Joachim Klein, 50, who was arrested last week in northern France where he had been living under an assumed name. The request was made in the weekend, the spokesman said. The extradition request was made in connection with the OPEC attack, he said, without specifying the charges.

Germany on Tuesday sought the extradition of Klein, who is wanted in Germany for three counts of murder and kidnapping in connection with the 1981 attack in Vienna. The kidnapping, in which 10 security guards and a diplomat were killed, was part of Carlos's most notorious attack. Klein suffered a heart attack wound, but was treated and allowed to fly to his accomplices and the stages.

Investigators say they lack of him after that, but they believed he had fled to Italy.

Congo

d Rwanda, both of which have Tutsi-dominated armed eastern Congo using the army.

"What is wrong with these people," said Museveni, who arrived in Uganda for a series of speeches with aides and an entourage.

"For me, I am very interested in this country," he said. "I am very interested in this country," he said. "I am very interested in this country," he said.

Uganda's former Rwandan army commander, Paul Kagame, who was arrested in Rwanda in October 1994 and later came to power to end the genocide in July 1994. Many RPF members, including Kagame, were arrested and detained in Rwanda.

Arrest him

after Monday's arrest, the government used to crush any attempt to end the country.

OSCE and WEU have called the violence in the Balkans during the widespread and support President Milosevic in his efforts to quell the violence.

Grubmayer, who worked for a former Austrian Chancellor, was arrested during his mission in the widespread and support President Milosevic in his efforts to quell the violence.

on Wednesday, European Union has appointed a special envoy to Albania with promoting political and ending the current unrest.

U.S. says North Korean rocket got close to Alaska — report

TOKYO (AFP) — U.S. officials have told Japan that part of a rocket launched by North Korea on Aug. 31 travelled about 6,000 kilometres and landed close to Alaska in the United States, public television said Wednesday.

Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) said the final part of the three-stage rocket appeared to have fallen in the Pacific off the U.S. state. The rocket overflew Japan after being launched from North Korea.

The United States initially suspected the launch was a test-firing of the medium-range ballistic missile Taepo-dong 1 but this week said it believed North Korea tried and failed to place a satellite in orbit.

North Korea says the satellite launch succeeded and the object is circling the Earth transmitting

revolutionary hymns in praise of its supreme leader Kim Jong-il and his late father, the "eternal president" Kim Il-Sung.

NHK said the U.S. side told Japan's defence agency of its latest estimate on the rocket trajectory after comprehensive analysis of data from a U.S. surveillance satellite and Japan's Aegis escort vessel.

The path was four times longer than the 1,500 kilometres originally estimated by Japanese officials.

The third stage was topped with a satellite which was likely to have burned up in the atmosphere, the television network said.

No immediate confirmation was available from the Japanese defence agency.

"We do not have such information," an agency spokesman said of the NHK report, adding he "cannot rule out the possibility" that top-level officials had received information.

Japan and the United States will reportedly issue a joint statement expressing concern over North Korea's rocket launch after ministerial-level security talks in New York on Saturday.

The statement will say the rocket launch greatly affects the peace and stability of Northeast Asia, Kyodo News agency quoted Japanese government sources as saying.

Japan to build space shuttle landing strip on Pacific atoll

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan plans to build a landing strip and flight facilities for its HOPE-X space shuttle on a tiny atoll in the Pacific island nation of Kiribati, an official said Wednesday.

"We are finalising negotiations with the Kiribati government over the project," said Hironobu Takada of the National Space Development Agency of Japan (NASDA).

"Both sides have basically agreed to go ahead with the project. We hope we can sign the contract by the end of December."

The spaceport on the atoll of Kiribati would be Japan's first overseas facility for space development and allow it to join the United States and Russia in a select club of nations with space shuttle technology.

The landing strip and facilities will be built on a 200-square-kilometre uninhabited peninsula on the mid-Pacific island, which would be loaned to the agency for free over a 20-year period.

It would serve as a landing field for HOPE-X, Japan's test space shuttle currently under development, and HOPE-X-A, its first unmanned space shuttle, scheduled to be launched in 2003, Takada told AFP.

"We chose Christmas Island [Kiribati] because of its geographic and climatic advantages," he said. "We had other candidates, including Cook Islands and Polynesian islands, but our choice was Christmas Island."

The agency also considered areas in Japan for the landing field but they were ruled out because of overcrowded airspace.

"Also if we built the landing strip in Japan, space shuttles would have to fly over China and the Korean Peninsula to land," he said.

The agency expects to rebuild a two-kilometre runway built by Britain during the 1950s as part of its nuclear test programme. Britain and the United States conducted nuclear tests on the island between 1956 and 1963.

"We plan to make use of the runway and newly construct facilities related to the project just next to the strip," Takada said.

The agency hopes to start building basic infrastructure as early as next March.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation Established 1975
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Editorial and Advertising offices
 Jordan Press Foundation,
 University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman

Telephones: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585

Facsimile: Editorial: 5696183, Advertising: 5693337

E-mail: jortimes@go.com.jo

Web Site: http://www.access2arabia.com/jordantimes/

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times Advertising Department

Why Aqaba?

MORE THAN eight years after the Gulf war and six years after Jordan restored its relations with Washington and London, the burdensome inspection regime imposed on Aqaba port continues. This arrangement is costing Jordan millions of dinars. Lloyds of London is still paid unnecessary fees for monitoring shipping lines into Aqaba for unfounded fear that contraband goods could be en route to Iraq through the port. The continued reliance on a foreign organisation to keep tabs on the Jordanian port suggests that there is still an element of mistrust on the part of the U.S. and the U.K. of Jordan's ability and determination to comply fully with relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions that pertain to Iraq. It must be very clear to everybody that Jordan has the know-how and the political will to enforce the sanctions on Iraq and that there are really no justifications to keep the Kingdom's only outlet to the sea under direct surveillance any longer.

While we recognise that the U.S. navy is monitoring all sealanes leading to Iraqi ports for possible violations of the embargo, we point out that none of the ports of the other neighbours of Iraq, i.e., Syria, Iran and Turkey, are being monitored. Therefore Iraq could import whatever it likes through the ports of these countries and then across land.

At a time U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan is suggesting a complete overhaul of the Western policy towards Iraq, including a thorough review of the sanctions imposed on it, the Aqaba situation should be made part of this comprehensive re-evaluation. In the wake of the most recent stand-off between Iraq and the Security Council, the U.N. secretary general is sending new feelers to Iraq with the hope of defusing the tension and putting the council's relations with Iraq on a new course. Obviously when the crippling sanctions on Iraq are lifted, the Aqaba situation would be automatically solved as well. Since the chances of attaining an effective breakthrough do not appear imminent, we in Jordan should not be forced to stomach any longer the siege of any part of our country.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek commented on Libya's decision to cancel the Ministry of Arab Unity. The writer said selfishness is prevalent in the Arab World, and Muammar Qadhafi took this step out of despair with the Arab nations, because they did not help Libya during the past seven year sanctions, and no Arab nation dared break the air embargo imposed on them. Consider then, said Fanek, what the Iraqi leadership might do, were it to follow the same course, as it undergoes sanctions killing hundreds of thousands of its children, while the Arabs are watching. "Would the Iraqi want to be Assyrians or Babylonians?" asked Fanek.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani expected that a breakthrough in the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority after the murders of the Awadallah brothers. He said the two brothers were killed under circumstances which don't need a very clever person to understand. Momani expected there to be cooperation between the Palestinians and the Israelis, especially on the security aspect — the major concern for the Israeli leadership as well as the American administration. The Awadallah brothers knew more than they were supposed to, which is why they were killed, he claimed. Momani also said that by killing the two brothers, the Muhie Edein Sharif file is closed and there is no need for further investigations seeing as Imad Awadallah was accused of killing him. But, charged the writer, there will always be a file open — the unanswered questions regarding the slayings of the Awadallah brothers: how Imad escaped, and how he was killed so quickly.

View from Academia

Better peace than 'piece'

WHY DOES U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross keep coming to the Middle East region every once in a while, when there seems to be no tangible evidence of a positive change of heart or of policy on part of the Israeli government vis-a-vis either the proposed U.S. plan regarding the 13.1 per cent Israeli withdrawal, or the implementation of peace agreements which Israel signed with the Palestinians in Oslo, Washington, Cairo, and Hebron (which have almost become dead history now)?

In our part of the world, you get all kinds of theories regarding the meaning of these visits. Some believe the visits to be purely, entirely and utterly routine and ceremonial. There is no substance to them. The bottom line, they tell you, is that the U.S. is not (has never been, in fact) in a position which enables it to play the role of the honest broker and to pressure Israel. At present (as almost always), the U.S. administration stands utterly helpless in the face of the Israeli government's adamant intransigence. At the same time, it is perceived (by itself, by the international community and by its allies) as a peace partner and a peace patron, and is expected therefore to play a role of some sort. So, what does it do? What should it do? Well, hell, easy: send Dennis Ross to the region. To do what? Nothing, just to show that America is paying lip-service to its role as a partner and a patron.

Others (those keeping up with the latest juicy events) add another dimension to the current visit. President Clinton, they explain, is in deep trouble right now over the Monica Lewinsky affair. He wants to show — to Congress, to State, to the American people, and to the world — that he can still function, do his job well, and attend to domestic and global matters which need constant attention, despite the scandal.

The more optimistic in our midst (whose number has been decreasing rapidly since the advent of the present Israeli government) think the U.S. administration is serious about resuscitating Israeli-Palestinian peace. It sends Ross either when it feels something has come up, or when it feels it has to make something happen somehow. If you do not provide the Palestinians and Israelis with a means (i.e. Ross) through which they are able to communicate, no communication happens. Besides, who says peacemaking is easy? You have to keep the parties concerned engaged in dialogue until something happens. Airing some of the differences, reservations, and fears may result in progress, no matter how reluctant or slow the response is.

There is a fourth theory, however: one which is somewhat disturbing — to the Arabs and Palestinians, that is. Propagators of such theory tell you that Ross comes to the region not so much to consult with the parties concerned (and not to pressure

the Israelis into implementing the agreements and withdraw, as some wishful thinking individuals in our part of the world keep hoping) but — surprise! — to pressure the Palestinians into giving more concessions.

Though not much widespread in Arab circles, this latest theory has nonetheless been gaining strength recently. Over the past seven or eight months, several Palestinian National Authority (PNA) officials, as well as several journalists and observers, have been stressing this idea. I remember distinctly hearing a PNA official telling the Monte Carlo Radio (Arabic Service) a few months ago, and I am quoting him almost verbatim: "Make no mistake about it, every time Dennis Ross comes to the region, he comes to pressure the Palestinians, not the Israelis. This is why we do not look forward to these visits."

Along these lines, it has also been recently revealed — and this is perhaps what initiated the recent Ross visit — that a PNA official (Ahmad Qura'i) has discussed with the Israelis the possibility of turning 3 per cent of the 13.1 per cent Israel is expected to hand to the Palestinians under the still-undeclared American plan into a "natural reservation." Mr. Qura'i himself confirmed this to Radio Monte Carlo a few days ago, but insisted that the said 3 per cent will be turned into a natural reservation only for a short period of time, and not permanently.

Permanently or not, however, the conclusion one draws from this latest incident is that the theory about Americans pressuring the Palestinians, or Americans expecting progress through Palestinian (not Israeli) concessions, seems to be gaining ground.

If such theory is true, it is bad news indeed. The Palestinians have conceded a lot so far. By accepting the American proposal of 13.1 per cent Israeli withdrawal, they have compromised about 17 per cent for the original Palestinian request was a 30 per cent withdrawal on part of Israel. If 3 per cent more is to be turned into a natural reservation, the concession comes to 20 per cent. How much has the Israeli government been willing to compromise? At best 1 per cent.

This looks bad. The so-called Arab man-in-the-street (who is a peace advocate deep-down, but who is immensely fed up with the Israeli government's procrastination tactics) does not (will not) stomach any more concessions on part of the Palestinians.

What should the Palestinians do? Well, if it is true that any progress in the Israeli-Palestinian talks will happen only if the Palestinians (and not the Israelis) change their position, and if it is true that the Americans are after concessions from the

Palestinians alone, the Palestinians (and this is the argument in the so-called Arab street) are called upon to stand firm and not make a single compromise. If the choice is between lame-dock peace now and fully-fledged peace later, then let peace come later.

The time factor is crucial for the Palestinians and the Arabs, and the majority of people would want peace to happen now — but not any peace. If progress in the talks with Israel is to be made at the expense of Palestinian rights (a lot of people are saying), let's not accept.

Time is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the Palestinians (and Arabs more generally) realise that the more time is wasted, the more Israeli occupation of Arab land is promoted, the more land is confiscated for Israeli settlement purposes, the more suffering there is for Arabs living under Israeli occupation, the more violence there is, the more lost opportunities, etc.

But wasted time is not in the interest of the Israeli government itself either. Whether it likes it or not, many (in Israel itself, in the region, and in the world) expect it to deliver on peace promises and peace agreements. The fact that, so far, it has not delivered is not to its credit. The American administration (no matter how helpless) is not happy with the position of the Israeli government. Many Americans (including traditionally pro-Israeli lobbyists) are not happy with it, the Europeans are not happy with it, Israel's peace partners in the Middle East are not happy with it.

There is, also, a lot of pressure on the Israeli government right now, more so (I would say) than on the Palestinians. There is a great dissatisfaction in Israel itself with the Israeli government, and there have been increased calls for withdrawing the vote of confidence and calling for early elections. By contrast, the Palestinian and Arab people, no matter how sincerely and speedily they want peace, understand well that the PNA cannot be expected to make any more compromises whatsoever. And there is no popular pressure on the PNA to make more compromises.

Patience is a crucial factor. The Palestinian negotiators are called upon right now (and this is the message from the street, as well as the reasonable thing to do) to play their cards right by clinging onto the fundamentals firmly, by sticking to their original yes to the American plan steadfastly, and by making no more concessions that harm the Palestinian image and peace.

Patience, patience, and more patience. If the choice is between peace or "piece" (as the sceptics and cynics like to call it), we want the former, no matter how long we have to wait.

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

Lagging behind

By Riad Al Khouri

SOME ASIAN Tigers are not growing as fiercely as they used to, and a few Latin American economies may be losing their status as superstars, but most of the rest of the developing world still seems to move ahead faster than the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). And within our own region, Jordan is starting to be a laggard among laggards.

Notwithstanding a few recent positive indicators, the Jordanian economy still has a long way to go to achieve sustainable growth. As real per capita income/GNP has fallen over the past three years, various problems are being exacerbated, including chronic unemployment and poverty.

Lacking heavyweight foreign investment and aid, Jordan can no longer depend solely on big projects or on foreign investment as an engine of growth in the medium-term. Public sector employment is in decline as a percentage of the national figure, and hiring by large firms is not going to act as a significant substitute.

In this context, development of micro- and small enterprises (MSEs) becomes imperative. Many people in Jordan go into business not in order to maximise their return on investment, but to "buy" themselves a job. If this "buys employment" not only for the entrepreneur but also for one or more other persons, so much the better. Other things being equal, if MSEs are effectively promoted, the ultimate goal of job creation is likely to be achieved.

Increased attention has thus been paid in recent years to MSEs as a growing source of income and employment. However, they have not yet emerged as a major force for growth, partly because of the credit bottleneck which ends up keeping most of them tiny.

The particular importance of financial credit for

MSEs is gradually being recognised, but this problem is still in many cases being dealt with in piecemeal and traditional ways such as grants, subsidies, etc. What is needed is an approach which works through the market to strengthen MSEs instead of replacing market forces with distorting mechanisms. Specific issues concerning MSEs including technology, entrepreneurship, and problems with the bureaucracy can be dealt with as the credit bottleneck is being eased. For example, the credit organisation which deals with MSEs will inevitably go over firms' accounts, thus paving the way for discussion and action on their needs. Such an approach will promote Jordan's government and donor policy goals directly through easing the credit bottleneck, and indirectly, through helping MSEs become more professional.

The present situation, however, shows a growing gap between the formal economy (particularly banks) and a mushrooming informal sector. The issue of credit and the development of MSEs has yet to be addressed by the traditional financial sector, and sources of MSE credit remain largely informal means of self-finance. Various institutions and programmes are trying to help, but such efforts have only been partially satisfactory and lag behind growth in MSEs and their hunger for credit. In any case, the approach of many organisations does not rely on competitive forces to provide solutions to MSE problems; and the picture is made worse by credit restrictions imposed on banking, with increasing demand being met by decreasing supply from the formal sector and sometimes unsatisfactory performance by NGOs and specialised institutions.

While banks in Jordan do not usually offer any specific financial products for MSEs, in economies of South and East Asia, Africa and Latin America where MSE financing programmes are well established and effective, the record often

shows a sustainable ability to provide financial services to the poor. This has not necessarily been the case in MENA, and Jordan is no exception.

According to recent research by Judith Brandtsma and Rafika Chaouali for the World Bank, only one private bank in MENA is engaged in MSE finance. Otherwise, most MSE finance programmes in the region lack basic information on their performance. They do not know, for example, the number of active borrowers or the outstanding loan portfolio. Even more programmes do not know the quality of their loan portfolio. Most also do not know their operational and financial costs of making and managing loans.

Brandtsma and Chaouali conclude that of the sixty MSE finance programmes in MENA, only two cover their operational and financial costs while making a profit that is reinvested. Of the rest, many programmes in the region may never become sustainable. Often government or quasi-government development funds, they are usually inefficient and charge subsidised interest rates. Given their "success" in Jordan and the rest of the region in reaching a large number of borrowers, sub-optimal but working management systems, and vested political interests, it is difficult to reorient these programmes toward full efficiency and cost recovery.

In short, many more and better MSE finance providers are needed in MENA, and this is no less true of Jordan. As in other domains, the picture presented by MENA as far as MSE finance is concerned is one of lagging behind the rest of the developing world. The question now is, can Jordan do any better? If foreign aid and investment pick up, the MSE issue may be temporarily — though erroneously — shelved. Otherwise, MSEs have to stay high on the Jordanian economic agenda to help Jordan avoid the status of star laggard in MENA.

LETTERS

A tragic anniversary

To the editor:

THE PATH of peace and the path of terror is still running alongside each other as they did on September 17, 1948, when the U.N. mediator in Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden, was assassinated. The French Colonel André Serot, chief observer in Jerusalem, who was sitting beside Bernadotte, was also killed. Serot's wife had been saved from a German concentration camp by the Swedish Red Cross expedition under Bernadotte in 1945. The murderers in a letter regretted the killing of Serot as a "fatal mistake." They had thought that the officer sitting beside Bernadotte was "the British agent and anti-Semite, General Lundström," also Swedish. This was 50 years ago. The murderers were never brought to justice. International law and U.N. resolutions have never been applied to Israel, neither by force nor by legal means.

Hannah Arendt wrote in "The New Leader" on October 23, 1948: "Bernadotte, agent for no one, died a hero's death, when he was killed by the agents of war."

A new trend in the world of politics is to apologise for old atrocities. Will it also spread to our area?

Ulla Khreis, Irbid.

There is no quick fix: Peace takes time

By George S. Hishmeh

THERE IS no doubt that President Clinton will appreciate nothing more in these gloomy days than the arrival here of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to sign and seal the American initiative for a 13 per cent Israeli pullback from the occupied Palestinian territories.

This may sound as wishful thinking for the beleaguered American leader who must be anxious for any distraction from the daily bombardment in the American media about this kiss-and-tell scandal swirling around him.

Or else how would one explain the President's surprise appearance at a long-scheduled White House briefing Sunday by senior aides for American Jewish leaders, who are not favourably disposed to the Israeli leader, and his reported pledge to do everything possible to advance the moribund Middle East peace process.

In fact, there is some speculation, also bordering on wishful thinking, that Clinton may be prepared to nudge the process to fruition in order to project his presidential image, something he is good at, as he did five years ago on the White House Lawn for the Declaration of Principles agreement, better known as the Oslo accords.

The argument goes that Clinton may have sent his presidential envoy, Dennis Ross, to the Middle East in the hope of shifting the spotlight away from America's full-time preoccupation with the lurid details of his affair with Monica Lewinsky, the White House intern. It will be recalled that he took time during his recent for-

eign trip to Russia and Ireland to unexpectedly call Arafat and Netanyahu with the news that he is sending Ross to the region to help narrow their differences.

Clinton, according to Jewish participants, assured his audience at the White House that the protracted negotiations are progressing better than publicly known although there remain some serious problems.

In turn, the participants, who represented mainstream Jewish groups like Americans for Peace Now, the Centre for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation, and the Seeds of Peace, reportedly assured the beleaguered American leader of their support in his unfolding political problems, particularly within the halls of Congress.

After their White House meeting, the Jewish leaders took part in an all-Jewish convention here that carried the Psalmist slogan, "Seek peace and pursue it." The conventioners also said in an opening statement that they are "deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation" in the Middle East, adding "we gather here today to urge the current Administration to intensify its efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East."

Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Martin Indyk, according to participants, urged the American Jewish groups to form coalitions with Arab-American groups to advance the peace process.

This was coincidentally a theme heard at the just-concluded symposium of the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine (CPAP) but with a different focus, and followed recent inconclusive attempts by Arab-American organisations to

respond to suggestions from middle-of-the-road American Jewish groups for collaboration.

A prominent educator, who once headed the respected Association of Arab-American University Graduates, argued at CPAP that in the wake of the Arab-Israeli stalemate "there seems to be no viable alternative to a one-state solution" for the Arabs and Jews in Palestine "and indeed it is apparent that there never really was one."

CPAP's annual conference, critical of the Oslo process, focused on "The Legitimacy of Resistance: Options for Palestinian Survival."

She continued, "The question of Palestine/Israel has played out and exhausted all the scenarios premised on a Jewish state in Palestine for Jews, the dissolution of Palestinians and their national claims by absorption into the larger Arab world, and the Oslo-produced apartheid separation."

Dr. Elaine Hagopian, professor emerita of sociology at the prestigious Simmons College in Boston, cautioned however that "the burden is on the Palestinians to initiate an enabling process and programme," explaining that it is unfortunate that "it is the oppressed who must confront the oppressors with their heinous deeds, and in the process change the character of the oppressor."

Dr. Hagopian cautioned that the actual legal form of the one-state solution requires further study. "Some think of it in terms of separate binational institutions, others see it as a federation of two nations," others, herself included "think of it in terms of one set of democratic and secular political institutions with constitutional guarantees for binational cultural and religious

expression."

Her five-point "strategy" urged among other things that Palestinians form coalitions with Israelis and other Jews "who are open to the idea of a democratic one-state solution in Palestine/Israel."

As far as the Palestinian/Arab community in the United States, she continued: "The most important task is to engage the community here in support of the idea of a democratic, secular binational state... another important role is to promote cooperation with the various American Jewish groups and individuals in North America who also support a democratic, secular binational state."

She disagreed with those who may see her suggestion as "too long term, and without rooting in reality." The university professor argued:

"To the contrary, there is no quick fix, and the search for one in the past 50 years has only made the situation more difficult to apprehend. What is suggested herein is rooted in reality, the reality brought into relief by Oslo. More importantly, it should never be forgotten that one hundred years ago, another people put forward a plan for the transformation of Palestine."

Fifty years later, they have achieved significant, but not complete success. The next decades will decide if their victory will be total and Palestinians will fade into history, or if Palestinians supported by other Arabs have the foresight to use their critical faculties to project their case for sharing Palestine/Israel equitably."

The writer is a freelance Washington-based journalist.

Society on the move Nerves of steel

It's safe to say it's been a thorny toss up in coming up with a name and credentials to fill the seat of President of the University of Jordan. Lobbying was fierce, names soared to the top of the candidates' list and were shot down just as quickly. Pitches for some candidates were rethought and decided against to avoid accusations of nepotism. So the spoils of the battle fell to acting university president Walid S. Almaani, a professor of neurosurgery, and most recently vice president for administrative affairs. Born in Jordan in 1946, Almaani received his M.D. in 1969 from Alexandria University in Egypt, and a diploma in general surgery in 1970 also from Alexandria University. He has been a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh since 1975. Almaani established the Department of Neurosurgery at the Faculty of Medicine and at the University of Jordan Hospital in 1977. He was dean of academic research in 1994, dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies from 1991-1994, vice dean of the Faculty of Medicine from 1989-1991, and professor of neurosurgery of the Faculty of Medicine since 1987. He has published more than 20 articles in international medical research journals and is a member of several scientific committees including the Jordanian Neurosciences Society (of which he was president for one term) and the Society of British Neurosurgeons. Presently Almaani chairman of the United Admissions Committee of the Jordanian Public Universities. He was also secretary general and Jordan's representative of the European Asian Chapter of the International Brain Research Organisation and sits on the governing council of that

organisation. Married with four children, his hobbies include photography, gardening and stamp collecting.



Professor Walid S. Almaani

engineering from the University of Cairo, an M.S. from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, and a Ph.D. in architecture, urban and regional planning from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He left Amman to become Jordan's trade and commerce representative at the Kingdom's embassy in Washington. He returned in the mid-90s to head the Jordan Investment Promotion Corporation. It was in February 1997 he took his current job at the ILO. When confirmed, Rifai will take the seat vacated by Abdul Ilah Khatib who was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in the cabinet formed by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh last month.

WANTED: An attractive international academic post, based right here in Amman, is up for grabs and was announced in the International Herald Tribune in its Monday edition. An advertisement placed by the Tokyo-based United Nations University announced a search for the position of director of the International Leadership Academy. The academy, which was established in Jordan just over two years ago was headed by Adel Safit until his two-year contract was not renewed last month. The programme of the academy aims at training potential leaders by direct interaction with present leaders and through a series of seminars and group training activities related to pressing global problems. The offices of the ILA are located on the campus of the University of Jordan, and at present is supported by a staff of two and an official dispatched from the United Nations

University in Tokyo to man the fort in the absence of a director. According to the advertisement the post carries a remuneration at the L-6 level of the United Nations salary scale of \$65,012 per annum plus post adjustment. The deadline for applications is October 16. Applications, including full curriculum vitae and names, addresses, fax number and e-mail addresses of three referees should be sent to: UNU/ILA Directorship Search, c/o Office of the Rector, The United Nations University, 53-70 Jingumae 5-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8925, JAPAN. Good luck.

MORE ON ACADEMIA: Judith Kipper, an internationally recognised Middle East specialist, is to arrive in Amman Sunday for almost a week of lectures, roundtable discussions and some catching up with colleagues, associates and friends. As co-director of the Middle East Studies programme at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies and director of the Council on Foreign Relations Middle East Forum, Kipper will hold a public lecture at the U.S. embassy's American Center on Sept. 22 on "Regional Stability: A look to the future," at 6:00 p.m. As the guest of the American Center, she will also hold a roundtable discussion with a small group of local journalists. On her agenda is another roundtable dialogue hosted by the Centre for Strategic Studies of the University of Jordan, on "American Policies and the Middle East," as well as a lecture at the World Affairs Council. She will also be interviewed by Radio Jordan and Jordan Television.

Kipper is a consultant on international affairs to ABC News. Previously, she was a guest scholar at The Brookings Institution and a resident fellow at the American Enterprise



Judith Kipper

prise Institute. She travels frequently to the Middle East visiting both Israel and Arab countries. She also meets regularly with officials and others in Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union. Kipper is the co-editor of The Middle East in Global Perspective (Westview Press, 1991), and supervised The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies, and The Arab-Israeli Military Balance and the Art of Operations. She contributes to publications such as The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post and comments on television and radio in the United States, Europe, Japan, China and the Middle East. She

speaks frequently to university, business, economic, and banking groups on Middle Eastern and international affairs. She has briefed The Brookings Institution Board of Trustees, Council on Foreign Relations Corporate Programme, Chase Manhattan Bank Board, Institutional Investor Council, World Trade Institute and many other institutions in the United States and internationally. During the Gulf crisis, Kipper testified as an expert witness before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee. She was with Peter Jennings of ABC News in England, and in Iraq for an extensive interview with President Saddam Hussein (November, 1990). She arrived with Ted Koppel of ABC News in Kuwait just after its liberation. She also went to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza during the Gulf crisis. Kipper has broad based experience in international relations. She worked in Paris at the French news weekly L'express for six years. She drove from Paris to India where she spent six months and then spent a year in Israel and Egypt before returning to the United States. She is on the board of Middle East Watch, a human rights organisation, and initiative for Peace and Cooperation in the Middle East. Phew!!!

Jennifer Hamarnah

Runaway Nazi? Ex-dictator? Mafia? If you need a lawyer Pedro is your man

By Gary Regenstreif
Reuters

PEDRO BIANCHI'S smile betrays his pride in being associated with a Nazi war criminal, an Italian mobster, a military dictator and less famous felons, like the one who poisoned her victims and another who chopped his up.

The lawyer for Argentina's most notorious criminals recalls some of the thousands of clients he has defended and boasts that, at 72, he is more in demand than ever.

Thick-set and bespectacled, Bianchi is dispassionate about the villains he has defended over half a century, has no qualms about having represented them and offers no excuses.

"Pedro Bianchi the lawyer is above Pedro Bianchi the man," he said in an interview in his plush Buenos Aires apartment.

"Morality and law don't always coincide. They are two different languages. My morality and ethics are to defend my clients the best that I can," he added. "The day I discriminate which case deserves defence and which not, I cease to be a defence attorney and convert myself into a kind of judge."

But Bianchi goes beyond the traditional attorney-client relationship, revealing: "I am friends with most of them."

One friend, his highest-profile client of late, is Erich Priebke, the former Nazi captain who lived peacefully in the Argentine mountain resort of Bariloche from 1954 until 1995, when he was extradited to Italy.

Priebke was sentenced to life imprisonment for taking part in the 1944 massacre of 335 men and boys at the Ardeatine Caves outside Rome. Bianchi has appealed to the Italian Supreme Court and, if that fails, will go the European court in Strasbourg.

Bianchi is also representing right-wing Italian extremist Augusto Cauchi, wanted for the 1980 bombing of the Bologna train station that killed 85 people and wounded 200. Argentine courts recently rejected an extradition request because Cauchi has been tried and sentenced in absentia by Italian courts.

Bianchi believes Priebke and Cauchi should not be tried.

"They could have been the authors but never guilty or responsible" for the crimes of which they are accused, he said, echoing the "I was

only obeying orders" argument used by many defendants in post-Second World War trials and others accused more recently of crimes against humanity.

Authorities in Argentina have sought to distance themselves from the country's image as a safe haven for Nazis such as Adolf Eich-

died, mostly Argentine. He was absolved of other charges related to his dictatorship and was released from prison in a 1989 pardon.

Bianchi's clientele also included Gaetano Fidanzi, a top godfather of Sicily's Mafia who in 1993 was extradited from Argentina to

Bianchi's favourite cases are homicides, having represented 600 clients including a woman sentenced to life for poisoning eight people and a man who cut his victims into pieces.

"I have a weakness for homicides," he said. "I like it because it is the only crime in which the criminology is important. How he killed is not as important as why he killed."

It gets to the bottom of the human soul.

Despite the gravity of crimes his clients are alleged to have committed, he has reservations only about defending rapists and those who committed fraud. "The swindler always lives off deception and lies. I always thought sexual crimes were repulsive. To me the other crimes are just another pigeonhole in the penal code. It is a code he taught for 35 years at the University of Buenos Aires before his age forced his retirement. But his years have not slowed him down. He goes to bed at midnight and is awake daily at 4:30, confessing almost apologetically to taking a two-hour nap in the afternoon.



One of Pedro Bianchi's clients, former Nazi SS Captain Erich Priebke is escorted by Argentine police towards a plane waiting to take him to Rome to face trial for World War II war crimes, November 20, 1995, in the mountain resort, Bariloche (Reuters photo)

mann and Josef Mengele. The government acted quickly to extradite Priebke once it found out about him.

Bianchi was also hired by Thomas Drach, arrested recently in Buenos Aires in connection with a 1996 kidnapping that led to the largest ransom payout in German history, \$16.5 million.

Bianchi says Drach will probably get three years in prison in Argentina for entering the country with false documents, but he is confident he can avert extradition to Germany to face charges of kidnapping tobacco magnate Jan Philip Reemtsma.

Another client was former military ruler Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri, who was jailed for initiating the 1982 Falklands war with Britain in which about 1,000 servicemen

Italy where he was jailed for drug trafficking.

One of the highest-profile homicide cases in Argentina brought Bianchi to the defence of the Shoklender brothers, convicted of killing their parents in a crime that gripped the nation. One brother has now left jail and is a lawyer himself for the human rights group Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.

Bianchi defended the ultra-nationalist former Argentine army colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldin, who led an uprising of "painted faced" rebels in 1990 ahead of U.S. President George Bush's visit. Seineldin, a hero of the Falklands war, was jailed for life for the revolt in which he occupied armed forces headquarters before being repelled by loyal troops.

But today the communists are more capitalist than socialist.

By Simon Pirani

THE LATEST twists in the political crisis in Moscow have pushed back into the limelight President Boris Yeltsin's political opponents, grouped around the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), the largest party in the Duma (state parliament).

Its refusal to endorse Yeltsin's nominee for prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, left Russia without a government as its currency and banking system collapsed and shops' food stocks were swept away by panic buying.

Yeltsin, a vocal anti-communist, had no choice but to negotiate with the CPRF. He held a round table meeting in the Kremlin with its leader, Gennady Zyuganov, and other parties' representatives.

All this raises the questions: could there be a return to communism or even a new Russian revolution? Boris Slavin, political commentator and former CPRF Central Committee member, says not.

He explains: "Zyuganov is talking very radically because 90 per cent of the population is up in arms. Obviously he wants to give expression to that."

"But on economic policy, he is talking not about the liquidation of private property, but about state regulation: Measures to protect domestic industry from bankruptcy, to restore the rouble and to protect the population from the effects of inflation. Zyuganov's programme is a special brand of Keynesianism, not socialism."

Many moderate and even right-wing politicians make similar demands, Slavin points out. For example, price controls on food and other necessities are being imposed not only by Zyuganov's co-thinker Aman Tuleev, governor of Kemerovo, but also by nationalist general Aleksandr Lebed, governor of Krasnoyarsk, and Eduard Russel, pro-market governor of Sverdlovsk.

Zyuganov has long advocated a capitalist economy with a strong state, rather than socialism. When he stood against Yeltsin in the 1996 presidential election, receiving three out of every seven votes, his main economic proposal was an alliance of the state and Russia's financial-industrial groups, the power bases of its billionaire oligarchs.

During the election campaign he went to the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland to tell international bankers and politicians that Russia would rather have direct inward investment than IMF loans.

The CPRF could make such a "Chinese model" work, he said, adding: "Our party is full of people who can create the sort of authoritarian organisation to enable business to be done."

As for the chances of a "new Russian revolution" led by the CPRF, it should be remembered that while 30 million Russians voted for Zyuganov in anger at poverty, instability and non-payment of wages, the party's links

with the organised workers' movement are tenuous.

The leaders of the miners, who have mounted the most militant protests against the non-payment of wages, are openly hostile to the CPRF.

The party is as anxious to court businessmen as it is to appeal to workers.

It shows off its own flashy new rich members, such as Moscow club owner Vladimir Semago and Krasnoyarsk chemical company boss Peter Romanov.

When the chips were down during the government crisis, Zyuganov — even before his trip to the Kremlin — met with the most powerful businessmen of oil, oil and car sales magnate Boris Berezovsky.

The CPRF is a parliamentary rather than a revolutionary party, and has even encouraged its co-thinkers to take ministerial positions under Yeltsin. Before becoming governor of Kemerovo, Aman Tuleev, number two on the party's 1995 Duma electoral list, had a spell as Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) affairs minister in Yeltsin's government.

Aleksandr Zaverukha and Aleksandr Nazarchuk of the CPRF's rural sister party, the Agrarians, have held agriculture portfolios. And the CPRF's leading economist, Yuri Maslyukov, was trade and industry minister for six weeks under prime minister Sergei Kirienko, before his government was disbanded by Yeltsin on 23 August. It was Maslyukov who for three years in a row saved the government's skin by convincing his more militant Duma colleagues to accept its budget proposals. His ministerial appointment provoked stormy protests from party hard-liners. Yuri Belov of St. Petersburg accused him of "betrayal."

So the CPRF is more capitalist than socialist and more coalitionist than revolutionary. It is also more nationalist than internationalist, and appeals to an exclusively Russian identity with greater enthusiasm than to the old slogan "Workers of the world unite."

The nationalism was there from the start. When the Soviet Union broke up in 1991

and the old Communist Party was banned in Russia by Yeltsin, fragments joined with right-wing nationalists in the so-called red-brown opposition. On its marches red flags went side-by-side with old Tsarist imperial emblems and even uniformed fascists.

The CPRF was born in 1992 from these fragments — and continued to work in alliance with nationalists and even fascists in pursuit of a strong Russian state.

For example, Zyuganov collaborates closely with Aleksandr Prokhanov, editor of the openly and vulgarly anti-Semitic weekly Zavtra. Zyuganov, who is fond of denouncing "cosmopolitians" (the word Stalin used to mean Jews), had a spell on the editorial board.

The CPRF's aggressive nationalism is also directed against the non-Russian nationalities of Russia's borders. When Chechenya claimed independence and Russia's military strongmen in 1994 used bombings and scorched-earth tactics against its population, the party complained that Russia's war was not pursued vigorously enough.

When Russia's human rights watchdog Sergei Kovalev denounced Russian attacks on Chechen civilians to the European Parliament, Yeltsin and Zyuganov made common cause against him. CPRF Duma deputies helped to make sure he lost his job.

Will this mixed-up party be important for Russia's future? Certainly. Its leaders may be mainly former Soviet officials, disgruntled at their loss of power, but its voters are a force to be reckoned with. Slavin points out: "Whatever Zyuganov's ideology, millions of Russians will continue to vote for him as a means of protesting against Yeltsin."

But his party is more likely to use these votes as bargaining counters for ministerial portfolios than to lead a working-class uprising.

The writer is a British journalist specialising in CIS affairs.

— Gemini News

The outlaws

By Jean-Claude Elias

THE HUGE amount of writing we have had in the past two or three years in Jordan on the issue of the protection of intellectual property has changed very little, if anything, on the copyright scene. Whereas the law has been adopted, its implementation has yet to come. The only positive outcome so far is more awareness of the public.

To be honest, we must admit that there is some protection as far as printed publications are concerned, but the level of protection for music and computer software is virtually nil. A lot has been said about the damage software piracy can do. Depriving authors of the royalties they deserve and, as a direct consequence, killing their potential creativity are the obvious negative effects of illegal copying and distribution. But there are also other hidden effects.

The majority of people who buy assembled PCs in Jordan have become accustomed to receiving pre-installed software with their machine. Most of the time this software — typically Windows operating system and Microsoft Office Suite — is pirated. The irony is that the user takes it for granted and demands other, non-essential software to be installed. Since it's free, why not have more?

Given the huge size of new hard disks, voracious users ask the supplier to "fill the disk" with programmes, without even knowing why they ask for this or that piece of software, whether they need it or not. They just want it installed, period. Such an aberrant situation makes users unhappy, for they can never quench their thirst for (collecting) software. To top the bill, they often demand to be trained, at no extra charge of course, on all these packages: "you supplied me with it, now teach me how to use it!" It also makes computer suppliers angry at having to respond to unreasonable demands.

Of course, not all computer companies in Jordan supply illegal software and some of them have learnt not to give in when greedy users ask, for instance, to have four different word processing programmes at one time.

Although I have been closely following up the question of software protection in Jordan for some time now, I still cannot give any reasonable forecast of when the law is going to be actually enforced. When it is, however, and in the short run, it will certainly put serious stress on suppliers and users alike. But I am sure that in the long run, we will all benefit from a healthier situation.



Marto-IMF talks signal possibility of extending restructuring programme

By Ghaila Alul

AMMAN — Finance Minister Michel Marto is in Washington to discuss with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the possibility of extending by at least one year Jordan's economic restructuring programme, officials said.

"It is a periodic get together meeting with the IMF to discuss outstanding economic issues," Minister of State for Development Affairs Taher Kana'an told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

Seeking to pull out from a deepening economic recession, Jordan expects to extend the 1989-1998 economic reform programme, that according to economists is an adjustment process not yet completed.

An extension of the IMF programme, originally set to end in February 1999, will help Jordan regain credibility with donor and debtor states especially after it was forced to reveal discrepancies in its economic growth rates three months ago.

But according to some economists, Jordan, which spent most of the decade implementing the programme after a severe crisis

in 1988, appeared to have been reaping the rewards of fiscal and monetary prudence.

They say the country was able to bring down its inflation rate to three per cent — well below the target agreed to with the IMF — foreign currency reserves were built up to cover almost five months worth of imports, and the budget deficit was reined in.

Still, with all these achievements, some analysts pointed to major challenges facing the newly appointed government which will have to deal with an economy growing much slower than the population, and at the same time continue with market liberalisation policies.

"There is still much to be done, especially when the process almost came to a standstill during recent years," economist Fahed Faneek wrote in a column published in the Jordan Times last month.

Faneek said Jordan has a long way to go in terms of restructuring some of its service sectors such as health, water and energy. It also needs to speed up a much delayed and controversial privatisation process.

"Jordan can benefit a lot from continuing with an economic programme with the blessing of the IMF. Such benefits include obtaining more concessions from major creditors, receiving more generous grants from donor countries, using the expertise of the IMF staff, securing a measure of international credibility of Jordan's economic performance, and enhancing potential investments from Arab and foreign sources," Faneek said.

During his visit to Washington, Marto is expected to discuss the release of the remainder of the U.S. annual aid package to Jordan, according to Faneek.

Last month, Jordan and the U.S. signed an agreement under which the Kingdom received \$54.3 million in grants as part of Washington's \$225 million assistance to the country in 1998.

About \$150 million of the total are in economic assistance and the remaining \$175 million are allocated to military purposes.

"Jordan received about \$50 million in cash, but it still awaits to receive the remaining \$100 million," Faneek said.

Jordan, EFTA talks start next week

AMMAN (Petra) — The first round of negotiations to discuss the draft free trade agreement between Jordan and the member states of EFTA (European Free Trade Association), will be held in Geneva on Sept. 22.

The draft agreement provides for the cancellation of all customs duties and taxes on EFTA imports from Jordan and Jordanian imports from the EFTA countries, except agricultural products and foodstuff industries which will be governed by bilateral agreements.

The draft agreement provides for avoiding the imposition of any new customs duties or taxes after the agreement takes effect and for lifting any restrictions on imports.

Under the agreement, Jordan may increase customs duties to protect new industries or any industrial projects, requiring a restructuring process, provided that such an increase will not exceed 25 per cent, will not be imposed for more than three years and that

the volume of such imports does not exceed 15 per cent of the total imports from EFTA countries.

According to the agreement, government subsidies which might affect the freedom of competition and contravene with the provisions of the agreement will be cancelled.

The Jordanian delegation to the Geneva meeting will be headed by Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Halaiga.

Jordan imported JD25.5 million worth of goods from EFTA member states in the first half of this year. Last year, Jordan imported JD 63.7 million worth of goods from these countries, mostly from Switzerland.

Jordan's exports to these countries last year amounted to JD360,000 while it exported JD 200,000 worth of goods to these countries in the first half of 1998.

EFTA includes Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

Pakistani delegation reviews ties with Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian and Pakistani economists and businessmen held talks Wednesday at the Amman Chamber of Commerce on economic relations and means of enhancing commercial exchange between Jordan and Pakistan.

Talks focused on studying investment projects that Jordan presented at the meeting and on means of launching joint ventures between the two countries in addition to purchasing Jordanian phosphate.

Also discussed was hold-

ing mutual exhibitions at both countries to acquaint the citizens of two countries with each country's products.

Haider Murad, president of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, headed the Jordanian delegation to the meetings while the Pakistani delegation was led by Hassan Zahir.

Murad said the trade balance is in favour of Jordan, pointing out that Jordan exported to Pakistan approximately JD13 million last year and that it

imported Pakistani goods worth JD3 million.

Murad voiced hope that trade exchange between both countries would increase in the near future.

Zahir said that he discussed with Jordanian businessmen ways of signing contracts between Pakistani and Jordanian businessmen to cooperate in exporting goods to Iraq in accordance with the U.N. oil-for-food deal.

The Pakistani delegation is on a tour in the region which takes them to Syria and Iraq.

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	ESP
US Dollar	1.0000	1.6930	0.8967	1.3953	138.07	1.5033	1672.36	1.9362	1.6784
DE Mark	0.5907	1.0000	0.3518	0.8246	78.78	0.8874	987.57	1.1277	3.3638
GB Sterling	1.1200	2.6381	1.0000	2.3392	226.56	2.6195	2862.88	3.1988	9.9172
CH Franc	0.7167	1.2116	0.4268	1.0000	96.73	1.0762	1196.93	1.3654	4.0642
JP Yen	0.0074	1.2825	0.4410	1.0325	1.0000	1.1122	12.38	141.25	4.2013
CA Dollar	0.6652	1.1258	0.3964	0.9278	1.11	1.0000	1112.15	1.2695	3.7744
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0120	0.3662	0.0834	1238.77	0.8985	1.0000	11.41	3.3940
NL Guilder	0.5238	0.8855	0.3121	0.7311	70.71	0.7871	875.86	1.0000	2.9732
FR Franc	0.1761	0.2981	0.1048	0.2643	23.77	0.2647	33.62	33.6200	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	3.7804	0.3770	3.6400	0.3042	3.6728	1817.26	3.3991
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2897	0.5317	5.1340	0.4291	5.1803	2139.59	4.7927
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1890	1.0000	0.1005	0.97	0.0811	0.98	404.56	0.9061
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8908	9.9488	1.0000	9.66	0.8070	9.74	4024.56	9.0141
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0303	1.0303	1.0000	0.9836	1.01	418.83	0.9338
Kuwait Dinar	3.2873	2.3307	12.3287	1.2382	11.97	1.0000	12.07	4987.67	0.9335
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0211	1.0206	0.9911	0.9828	1.00	413.10	0.9282
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4673	2.4718	0.2485	2.3991	0.2005	2.4207	1111.11	2.2396
Egyptian	0.2943	0.2086	1.1037	0.1108	1.0712	0.0895	1.0809	448.51	1.0000

Energy									
Oils	Last	Revenue							
Brent	0.00	0.00							
W. Texas	14.80	14.69							
Bonny	0.00	0.00							
Dubai	12.71	12.40							
UL Gas	132.00	129.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4515	0.1502	0.3725	36.0388				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.45106	0.15237	0.38042	36.7999				
KW Dinar	3.2873	5.65793	1.9604	4.5348	444.247				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.49236	1.58203	3.70445	358.551				
CY Pound	1.9906	3.3691	1.186	2.7764	266.742				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	288.2	288.7							
Silver (oz's)	4.95	4.98							
Platinum (oz's)	360.5	362.5							
AL (3 Months)	1355	1358							
CU (3 Months)	1670	1673							
Zinc (3 Months)	1035	1038							
Lead (3 Months)	526	529							
Ni (3 Months)	4090	4100							

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (c/lbs)	105.83	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1985	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	216	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	100	Spot							
Soya (c/lbs)	25.61	Spot							
Tea (stg/kg)	125	Spot							
Barley (\$/sh)	415	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot							

Libor Fixing									
Period	1-3	3-6	6-12	1-4					
Currency	Month	Months	Months	Year					
USD	5.8898	5.5000	5.4063	5.2817					
GBP	7.4688	7.4375	7.3125	7.0781					
JPY	0.4180	0.4258	0.4688	0.4688					
DEM	3.4688	3.4688	3.5313	3.6625					
FRF	1.5000	1.5898	1.7148	1.7930					
CHF	3.5000	3.5332	3.5547	3.5879					
ITL	6.1990	6.0300	4.5040	-					

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	Buy	Sell							
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.1831	1.189							
DE Mark	0.4187	0.4206							
CH Franc	0.5076	0.5101							
FR Franc	0.1249	0.1256							
JP Yen	0.8274	0.83							
NL Guilder	0.3713	0.3732							
IT Lira	0.4238	0.425							

UNCTAD urges big powers to reflate global economy

GENEVA (R) — The United Nations trade and development agency UNCTAD on Wednesday called for action by the United States, the European Union (EU) and Japan to reflate the global economy and head off a dive into worldwide recession.

The agency also urged creation of a new international system to supervise capital flows that would prevent financial crises of the type that has plagued Asian economies into chaos and threatens to spread around the globe.

The twin messages were delivered in UNCTAD's annual Trade and Development Report — a publication that has warned for the past decade of the dangers of a rapid switch to market economics by developing and former communist countries.

Unless East Asia switched from deflation to reflation, and the EU and Japan boosted domestic demand for goods and services, the report said, "there could be a

full-blown global recession." A solution to the creeping crisis, UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero told a news conference, lay in cooperation between these two economic powers and the United States to lower interest rates and bring in expansionary fiscal policies.

"The most important things to be done have to be done by the largest economies in the world," he declared.

The report was written before the latest eruption of financial market turmoil brought economic and political crisis to Russia and, threatening to engulf Latin America, moved closer to the United States.

Distributed worldwide under embargo for the past few weeks and already presented by UNCTAD economists in 21 key capitals, the report's release comes just two days after U.S. President Bill Clinton, followed since by other Western politicians, appeared to take up some of its recommendations.

Ricupero, ex-finance minister of Brazil, said Clinton's new stance vindicated UNCTAD's long-held view that the domination of unpredictable financial markets in a globalised economy gave them the capacity to destabilise developing countries.

The U.S. president, in a key speech on Monday devoted to the current crisis, said the industrialised world's highest priority should be to restore growth and declared he wanted to work with the EU and Japan in this direction.

The UNCTAD chief said at his Geneva news conference that this was a recognition, "forced... by the tyranny of reality," that the main danger to global economic stability was not inflation "but deflation, recession and unemployment." The report, compiled by UNCTAD economists who have recently swung some prominent free-marketeters around to their views, said financial instability was "systemic" — endemic to the global econ-

omy and not just to emerging economies. But previous action by the major powers to solve their own problems had hit increasingly at developing countries.

UNCTAD analysts estimated the cost of the East Asian crisis this year alone at one per cent of global output, or some \$260 billion — equivalent to the annual income of sub-Saharan Africa — while world growth in 1998 would be around two per cent, down 1.2 per cent on last year.

"Resolving a crisis of over-investment and systemic financial fragility by reducing domestic demand will only add to the difficulties," the report said.

"Justice is not served when the costs of market failure and measures taken to bail out creditors are paid by developing countries and at the expense of the living standards of ordinary people." To prevent crises in the system, the report argued, global agreement was needed on a new architecture of rules

governing international finance and a mechanism to supervise capital flows through "even-handed surveillance" — recognising that crises were not always home-grown in emerging economies.

The new arrangement should recognise the right of developing countries to introduce capital controls — an action recently taken in different form in Malaysia and Chile — on the lines of safeguard provisions in global trade accords.

Controls, it said, were a proven technique for dealing with volatile capital flows and would remain "an indispensable part of developing countries' armoury of measures for the purpose of protection against international financial instability." A safeguard mechanism, Ricupero said, would allow lenders and investors "to know in advance that they may be locked in should financial panic develop and currencies come under attack."

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Foot part
- Hold up
- Ship's poles
- "Pretty Woman" co-star
- Sikorsky of helicopters
- Embroidered loop
- Mature
- "Lisa"
- When actors enter
- Jim Henson's muppet vamp
- Playful marine mammal
- Put forward
- By oneself
- Christians, today
- Have high hopes
- Johann and Richard

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Aqel proposes allocating one per cent of banks' lending to finance small size projects

ARAB BANK Regional Director Mufleh Aqel said in a working paper he submitted to a conference on economic and social development in Jordan's rural and badia regions that by allocating one per cent of their total lending, Jordanian banks can set aside JD40 million to finance small projects.

Aqel referred to several studies conducted by AMIR (Access to Microfinance and Improved Policy Reforms), a USAID \$13.4 million programme, and other parties to show that there are around 74,000 potential borrowers in this sector requiring a total financing of around JD48 million.

He stressed the need to provide financial resources to help increase the number of small projects which, he said, 43 per cent of them depend on financing from friends and relatives. Aqel acknowledged that Jordan banks have limited contribution in financing small projects. "The banks have not yet developed the right strategy to deal with the needs of this sector besides the fact bank do not have specific perceptions in relation to this type of lending," the senior Arab Bank official said. Furthermore, Aqel added, the banks do not have clear plans how to identify the borrowers who fit the classification of small-size projects.

According to the senior banker, the problem was partially addressed by the government's specialised lending institutions which directed some of its resources for this purpose, especially in the agricultural sector. "But this government intervention did not achieve the target," Aqel said. "Accordingly, continued efforts are

being exerted to transfer this role to specialised financial brokerages which operate in different economic conditions in terms of interest rates, lending sources and financing areas."

The working paper attributed the general reason for the absence of bank from the area of lending to small projects to the restricted financial market which prevailed in the past such as fixed interest rates, high reserve levels and direct supervision on credits. He said also that, as a result, small-size projects have gotten accustomed on subsidised economic financing which was often not repayable.

Other reasons cited in the working paper were the high cost to implement and administer such loans and the low return from such lending in absolute terms compared to high indirect costs. Furthermore, Aqel said such type of lending carried a higher risk compared to ordinary lending in addition to the insufficiency of guarantees due to the kind of loans.

Finally, Aqel listed the following three factors that prevailed and caused small entrepreneurs not to approach banks for credits:

- 1- The limited banking knowledge of small borrowers.
- 2- Difficulty in foreclosing on the property in case of default because of the low value of the assets in addition to other social considerations.
- 3- The psychological and social barriers as there are many who still believe that banks are only for the rich (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq).

RJ, Austrian Airlines agree on code-sharing


AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Jordanian (RJ) and Austrian Airlines Wednesday signed a code-sharing agreement aimed at organising flights between Amman and Vienna.

Under the agreement, which will benefit passengers of both airlines, both parties will offer the benefits of their networks to the other.

As a result of the agreement, three regular weekly flights will be shared jointly on a code-sharing basis, thus bringing to six the number of weekly flights, according to Majdi Sabri, the RJ deputy director general for commercial affairs.

The agreement takes effect as of Oct. 25. Sabri said adding that other commercial agreements have already been concluded between RJ and the Austrian Airlines, under which RJ gets special prices and special privileges to fly to Scandinavian countries as well as to east Europe.

The agreement was signed for the Royal Jordanian by Sabri while it was signed for the Austrian Airlines by its director Bernard Biyak.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET												
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JERUSALEM												
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179												
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 16/09/1998												
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADS.	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
S 355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	18.2	.90	2	30	6680	220.50	223.00	2.50+		
S 2.000	1.620	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	5	6050	10033	1.65	1.65	-		
+S 3.200	1.030	BANK OF JORDAN	7.8	0.00	15	48958	49905	1.06	1.03	-.04-		
S 2.680	1.990	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.52	2	1500	3385	1.58	1.59	.01+		
S 6.510	2.410	THE HOUSING BK.	10.7	2.39	33	9800	28887	3.00	2.95	-.05-		
S 3.450	1.760	JOR. KUNMIT BANK	8	0.00	1	50	89	1.80	1.78	-.02-		
S 570	580	JOR. GULF BANK	5	0.00	5	4500	2610	.58	.58	-		
S 3.910	1.690	JOR. TELKALIK BANK	17.8	0.00	16	15886	27557	1.72	1.74	.02+		
+ 980	750	SEIT. AL-HAL (SETINA)	3.6	0.00	4	1200	893	.77	.74	-.03-		
+ 920	600	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	5	0.00	4	205	141	.70	.70	-		
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 292.21	%CHG: +0.66	87	88171	129179					
+ 2.350	2.140	GENERAL ARAB INSUR.	22.3	3.92	2	1612	3288	2.14	2.04	-.10-		
2.550	1.740	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.4	9.43	10	8100	21479	2.68	2.65	-.03-		
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 126.67	%CHG: -0.55	13	9740	24821					
S 2.240	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.7	5.54	20	23226	34711	1.49	1.49	-		
S 4.030	1.650	IRSID ELECTRICITY	11.9	5.18	1	100	193	2.03	1.93	-.10-		
S 5.200	2.450	ARAB TEL. BOTELA	17.8	3.48	2	3258	5440	4.51	4.32	-.16-		
S 1.380	740	NATL. PORTFOLIO	30.7	0.00	2	100	388	.78	.77	-.01-		
S 1.120	.680	REAL ESTATE INV.	13.5	0.00	1	600	414	.70	.69	-.01-		
S 590	.280	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	5	11100	2108	.28	.28	-		
S 1.480	1.060	MID. EAST HOTELS	7	0.00	5	1500	8344	1.09	1.09	-		
S 4.600	1.880	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.7	2.04	4	1250	2450	1.95	1.96	.01+		
S 1.050	.690	SARAA EDUCATION	20.5	0.00	1	800	445	.89	.89	-		
S 1.350	.950	UNITED FOR FINANC. INV.	1.4	5.79	2	20000	22200	1.12	1.11	-.01-		
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 105.72	%CHG: -1.01	43	66126	77693					
+ 3.900	1.840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.5	5.67	9	1353	2640	1.94	1.94	-		
+ 6.500	4.000	ARAB POTASH CO.	19.4	5.06	5	38831	155376	4.00	3.95	-.05-		
S 11.250	10.050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.2	8.44	12	1698	17862	10.56	10.53	-.03-		
S 1.370	1.000	WOLAN INDUSTRIES	11.1	7.16	1	100	100	1.02	1.00	-.02-		
S 1.670	1.040	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AGM.	67.4	0.00	4	591	670	1.14	1.14	-		
S 7.350	5.500	JOR. WOODSTOCKS	7.9	3.31	2	200	1210	5.90	6.05	.15+		
S 5.740	2.450	ARAB PEAKING	7.5	2.76	34	13501	36608	2.70	2.72	.02+		
S 5.590	1.100	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	5.0	8.70	3	789	906	1.15	1.15	-		
S 6.350	4.700	DAR ALDAMA. INV. INV.	6.7	6.27	2	888	4952	5.60	5.58	-.02-		
S 1.570	.390	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	13.5	0.00	8	9500	3800	.41	.40	-.01-		
S 3.720	1.880	GENERAL INVESTMENT	14.8	3.08	3	2159	7120	3.35	3.25	-.10-		
S .590	.300	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	17	21850	6996	.32	.32	0.00		
S 1.760	.760	UNIV. CHEM. INDUS.	9	8.70	4	600	551	.90	.92	.02+		
+ 4.050	2.440	ALANDIN CO.	19.5	3.45	1	100	232	2.44	2.32	-.12-		
S 2.300	.700	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MFAC	33.8	0.00	6	2950	2088	.73	.72	-.01-		
S .730	.380	JOR. SULPHUR-CHRM.	7.8	0.00	6	2950	1210	.41	.41	-		
S 1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM. CHRM.	14.1	9	4	1418	1815	1.27	1.28	.01+		
S .390	.000	KANTHER INVEST.	9	0.00	3	1000	470	.47	.47	-		
S 1.280	.520	UNIV. MOD. INDUS.	11.2	8.57	40	27200	18251	.68	.70	.02+		
S 1.920	.500	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	9	0.00	9	4250	2169	.52	.52	-		
S 1.600	1.200	NATL. TELEPHONE	8.8	7.94	1	1157	1197	1.26	1.26	-		
S 1.080	.600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	9.0	15.63	6	3000	1920	.64	.64	-		
S 1.560	1.150	EL. & RAY READY WEAR	42.2	0.00	3	3500	4200	1.21	1.20	-.01-		
S 1.310	.910	TIPTA. PHARMACO	13.5	5.56	43	21601	23366	1.00	1.05	.05+		
S 1.220	.860	UNION CH. & VEB.	10.5	0.00	3	1100	1065	.98	.98	-		
S .890	.660	JORDAN STEEL	9.5	8.24	5	13700	11770	.86	.85	-.01-		
S .720	.580	NAT. ALUMINUM	34.2	0.00	33	35380	24632	.69	.69	-		
S .670	.530	MID. EAST COMPLEX	10.0	0.00	4	2000	1090	.54	.55	.01+		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 79.65	%CHG: -0.36	269	213116	333031					
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 175.65	%CHG: +0.32	412	371153	564723					
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 16/09/1998												
+H 1.050	.870	EXPORT & FTM. BUK. 75%	15.9	0.00	1	500	305	.87	.86	-.01-		
+H 1.000	.950	JOR. INT. INSURANCE CO	8	0.00	1	100	90	.95	.90	-.05-		
H		AMMAN INSURANCE	8	0.00	1	250	238	1.00	.95	-.05-		

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You could say something to a loved one this morning that you didn't expect, but sincerely feel. You're generally outspoken, but when it comes to emotional stuff, you can get tongue-tied. But this morning you might blur out something about love, or forever, or commitment. Not to worry. It's a good day for it.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Completion is the theme again. Action is required, and you'll have to make several big decisions. Heed a roommate's advice; but you'll have to live with your decision for a long time, so make sure it's one that supports you. If it does, it will likely also support the people you love most. That's just the kind of person you are.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There's something you'd like to change about your domestic environment. It doesn't matter if you've never done it before. You can learn. Other people do it, and you're certainly as smart as they are — smarter than some. All in all, definitely capable. Go for it.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) The sun is in Virgo and the moon is in Leo. Finish up old business today. Don't start anything new. Gather in money that's been promised, rather than getting new promises. New promises won't be worth much today, so there's no point in trying to gather them up. Go for the gold instead.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your motivation has to be to take care of other people or you won't succeed. If you can pull this off, you can acquire great fame and fortune. Today, don't start any new projects. Finish up something you've been working on. That means put in the corrections. If other people notice something wrong, listen and heed their advice.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Today's agenda involves finishing old business. That's been a theme for the last few days, but now there's no turning back. The urgency of the situation will be apparent early in the morning. You might not even have time to make lists. You're going to have to rely on your memory and, in some cases, your imagination. No problem, right?

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The moon is in Leo again, but it's void of course. That means it's made all the aspects it's going to make before it goes into Virgo tomorrow. The void of course moon means that whatever is going to happen has already happened, and now all we need to do is clean up. Not a bad idea, all things considered.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The moon's in Leo, conjunct Mars in Leo first thing this morning, so the Leo people in your life might be feeling a little feisty. Mars would get them to do things they've been thinking about, but resisting, or afraid to try. So if you want to get an older person into action, give a little shove today. It could work.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your burning curiosity could lead you to try something you've never considered before. Since that's a rarity, you should be in for an interesting day. You'll do well to go back to a previous location, school or endeavour, but don't worry. It'll be different now, and what you'll be learning is all new.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Money is again the focus today. If you can pay your bills early, you'll be ahead, even if you haven't received your paycheck yet. This coming weekend, by the way, is going to be excellent for travel. So get chores done early. You'll want to have the time for other things.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you push a partner intellectually today, you can get what you want. You usually figure out what's going to happen, then let someone else carry out the plan. That's what's going on now, but you can't just sit back like a mouse in a corner and hope everything goes well. You're going to have to get involved.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Everybody's racing around, trying to do more than can possibly be done in the allotted time. If you think of it as a game, it'll be a lot more fun. If you think of it as being serious and life-and-death and all that, you'll only get yourself stressed out and make the job even more difficult.

Palestinians inaugurate private sector trade board

RAMALLAH (R) — Palestinian businessmen inaugurated a private-sector trade board for exports on Wednesday while Israel maintained a closure on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Paltrade, representing exporters in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, "will be an invaluable tool for Palestinians looking to do business abroad as well as for foreigners seeking to invest here," U.S. Consul General John Herbst told an inaugural lunch.

Herbst urged the businessmen not to be discouraged by Israeli closures of the self-ruled areas — the latest of which was imposed last week after Israeli troops killed two top members of the Islamic militant group

UEFA Cup

Fenerbache upsets Parma; Feyenoord wins at Stuttgart 3-1

LONDON (AP) — Turkey's Fenerbache — with a hefty financial bonus reportedly on the line — upset AC Parma 1-0 Tuesday as this season's UEFA Cup kicked off with 31 first-round, first-leg matches.

The other stunner saw Dutch leaders Feyenoord win at Stuttgart 3-1, a match in which Dutch hooligans

Romanian striker Viorel Moldovan scored for Fenerbache on a header in the 23rd off a free kick from Bosnian Elvir Balic. The Turkish side failed to increase the margin despite a man advantage for the last 30 minutes when Dino Baggio was sent off — and a two-man edge the last two minutes when Fabio Cannavaro was dispatched.

'95 UEFA Cup and players last season in the Champions League.

In Stuttgart, Jon Dahl Tomasson notched two first-half goals as Feyenoord Rotterdam shocked Stuttgart 3-1 before 25,000 home fans in Germany.

Jean Paul Van Gastel put the Dutch ahead in the 19th and Tomasson scored two

arating the stands from the field. Several fans were arrested, while one security guard was carried off injured. His condition was not immediately known. Riot police ringed off the section of the stands filled with Dutch fans.

Fearing clashes, German authorities sent 1,000 policemen and 500 security guards to the match.

In Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Red Star Belgrade scored twice in the first 12 minutes and dominated only to see Metz score in the final minute, leaving the Yugoslav team with a slim 2-1 win.

Perica Ognjenovic scored in the third minute from six meters and Goran Drulic made it 2-0 in the 12th from nearly the same spot.

The young, inexperienced Red Star team dominated most of the match and Metz, which has not scored a goal in the first five rounds in the French league, finally broke through when Bruno Rodriguez scored in the 90th.

In Warsaw, Poland, Monaco semifinalists in last year's Champions Cup — got three second-half goals to win 3-1. Lodz took the lead in the 10th on Piotr Matys' goal. Monaco equalized on an own goal in the 59th by Witold Bendkowski.

Trezeguet made it 2-1 on a penalty in the 69th and Croatian international Robert Spehar added the clincher in the 84th.

Monaco is unbeaten this season and beat league champion Lens 2-0 last week.

In Bratislava, Slovakia, Czech-born Patrick Berger — with friends in the stands — scored in the 18th for Liverpool on a free kick from 30 meters. Karlheinz Riedle made it 2-0 on a close-in header in the 23rd and Michael Owen capped it off, scoring in the 59th for a 3-0 Liverpool victory and a comfortable edge for the second leg.

In Bari, Italy, Brazilian Edmundo scored twice in the second half, including the winner with eight minutes left, to rally 10-man Fiorentina past Croatia's Hajduk Split 2-1.

Fiorentina trailed 1-0 at halftime on Jurica Vucko's goal, but Edmundo equalized in the 51st. The hosts had defender Moreno Torricelli expelled in the 72nd, but Edmundo completed the comeback with a rising blast from 12 metres (yards).

In Madrid, Brazilian Juninho returned from injury to score in the 15th as Atletico de Madrid beat Obilic of Yugoslavia 2-0.

Jose Maria Romero added the other in the 53rd.

Obilic, playing his first European match, is the defending champion of the Yugoslav league. Obilic's president is Zelko Raznatovic, a former Serb paramilitary leader known as 'Arkan' who is wanted by the west for war crimes.

Since he faces arrest if he leaves Yugoslavia, Raznatovic's wife Svetlana represented him at the game in Madrid.

In Birmingham, England, English league leaders Aston Villa survived 3-2



High flying tackle from Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (No.9) of Leeds as he lifts Jorge Soares (up) of CS Martimo in their UEFA Cup first round, first leg match in Leeds Tuesday (AFP photo)



AC Parma's Colombian forward Asprilla (R) runs next to Istanbul's Fenerbache Erol Bulut during their UEFA Cup first round, first leg match in Istanbul, Tuesday Istanbul won 1-0 (AFP photo)

clashed with a heavy police presence estimated a 1,000 with 500 more security guards on duty.

In key other games, Red Star Belgrade, Monaco, Liverpool and Fiorentina got off to winning starts.

Fenerbache players reportedly will receive a dlr 18,000 bonus for advancing to the next stage, which means surviving in the second leg in two weeks against Parma, winners of the '93 Cup Winners Cup.

minutes later to make it 2-0. Fredi Bobic got Stuttgart back into the game with a goal in the 31st but Tomasson scored again a minute later.

Notorious Dutch fans tore down one of the fences sep-

De La Hoya sees a fading opponent in Chavez

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Julio Cesar Chavez knows only one way to approach his rematch with Oscar De La Hoya.

It might be the only chance he has.

"This time you're going to see the warrior Chavez," he vowed. "I'm going to break up Oscar with punches this time."

Two years after he was bloodied and beaten by De La Hoya, Chavez gets another shot at the welterweight champion Friday night in what, at age 36, is likely his last major fight.

He hasn't exactly done much to earn a rematch, except to irritate De La Hoya to the point where he wants to fight him again. But Chavez is still confident despite the beating and the ravages of more than 100 ring wars in his 18-year career.

"I don't care what's being said about me," Chavez said at Tuesday's final pre-fight news conference. "This fight will be entirely different."

Chavez and De La Hoya will both be fighting for some respect when they meet in the scheduled 12-round bout for

De La Hoya's WBC welterweight title.

For Chavez, it's respect from boxing fans who believe he is over the hill and shouldn't even be in the ring. For De La Hoya, it's respect he believes he didn't get from Chavez for his win the first time.

"If it was up to me, this one wouldn't even be in the record books," De La Hoya said. "I'm fighting for the respect he didn't show me the first time. That's how personal this one is."

Simply put, he wants Chavez to tell him that he is

indeed the better fighter, something he didn't do after the first fight.

"A fighter like him will never admit he lost," De La Hoya said. "The only way for me to get him to admit defeat is a devastating knockout."

In their first fight, De La Hoya sliced open Chavez's face, then beat him into a bloody pulp until the fight was finally stopped in the fourth round.

Chavez claimed after the fight that he sustained a cut over his eye while playing with his young son the week before the bout and that he would have never lost if the cut had not reopened.

On Tuesday, Chavez backed off that story a bit, but refused to concede anything else to De La Hoya.

"De La Hoya said I didn't give him respect in the first fight," Chavez said. "I didn't give it because it was never earned."

Chavez (101-2-2, 84 knockouts) figures to be looking at his last big payday in a career that began 18 years ago in his hometown of Culiacan, Mexico. He's taken the fight seriously, going to the high altitude of Colorado to train for two months to get his body into shape.

Odds makers don't figure that will be enough against De La Hoya, however, who is younger, stronger, faster and undefeated in 28 fights. De La Hoya, a 2-1 favorite the first time they met, is an 8-1 favorite this time. "He knows this will be his last major event," De La Hoya said Tuesday. "I really recommend he retires after this."

Borg beats McEnroe in charity game

SODERTALJE (AP) — Bjorn Borg beat John McEnroe 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 Tuesday as the two former tennis greats clashed in a charity game in Borg's home town Sodertalje.

Borg, who had trained two hours every day for the last three weeks, broke the American twice to clinch the first set 6-4.

Then McEnroe bounced back, taking the second set 6-4 after breaking Borg twice. In the deciding both players held service until the tenth game, when Borg broke McEnroe to clinch the match.

Tennis commentators and coaches said the match was far better than they had expected.

"Both players were impressive. Borg was playing a lot better compared to when he launched his unsuccessful comeback in Monaco in the late 80s," said Percy Rosberg, who coached Borg before he had his international breakthrough.

Manchester United fans protest against takeover bid

MANCHESTER (AP) — More than 1,000 Manchester United fans rallied here Tuesday to protest against a 623-million-pound (\$1 billion) takeover of the club by satellite broadcaster BSkyB.

Former players and rock star Gordon Taylor lent their support to the Independent Manchester United Supporters' Association demonstration against the biggest takeover bid in sports history.

IMUSA chairman Andy Walsh said objections raised by fans would go into submissions being prepared for the Office of Fair Trading investigation into the deal.

Meanwhile a second potential buyer for Manchester United put its bid on hold Tuesday.

American investment bank Salomon Smith Barney, asked on behalf of an undisclosed client to negotiate with Manchester United financial advisers HSBC Holdings, said Tuesday it had advised its client against proceeding until the OFT review of the BSkyB deal was finalised.



Oscar De La Hoya (L), WBC welterweight champion and former champion Julio Cesar Chavez pose at a news conference Tuesday in Las Vegas before their fight scheduled for 18 September. Their first encounter was stopped by the referee in the early rounds when Chavez suffered a severe cut, setting the stage for the rematch (AFP photo)

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	Sophie Marceau in Leo Tolstoy's ANNA KARENINA Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam .. in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD '1' NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria ARMAGEDDON Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GREAT EXPECTATIONS Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY Terrorism



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WATCH OUT FOR
THE NEW PLAY
Terrorism

Sports

Commonwealth Games

England and Canada silence Australian swimming anthem

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Canadian and English swimmers put up a dam on Wednesday to slow Australia's flood of gold medals as Commonwealth Games track giants out-psyched each other ahead of a 100-metre showdown Thursday.

Australia ran riot in the gymnastics — led by Andrei Kravtsov — but were held to two titles alongside Canada and England in the swimming, ending their daily domination of the pool.

James Hickman won the men's 200 metres butterfly and Mark Foster the men's 50m freestyle to get England's campaign back on track.

Hickman, 22, who was disqualified for a deliberate false start in the 100m butterfly, set a Games record time of 1min 57.11sec.

England's defending champion Mark Foster won the 50m freestyle final in another Games record time of 22.58sec that kept Australian swimming superstar Michael Klim in second place.

Hickman said: "We're tired of hearing the Australian national anthem."

Canada got their revenge through Marianne Limpert, who took the women's 200m individual and Mark Versfeld, who added the 100m backstroke title to his 200m backstroke gold.

It was impossible to keep the Australians off the podium though and Rachel Harris took the women's 800m freestyle and Giana Ronney, Helen Denham, Petria Thomas and Susie O'Neill took the women's 4x100m medley relay.

O'Neill has now equalled

the nine career Commonwealth Games golds won by fellow Australian swimmer Mike Wenden. She could beat it Thursday in her favourite 200 metres butterfly.

Athletics started with Kenya's Simon Maina taking the 10,000 metres gold. Australia's Debbie Sosimenko won the women's hammer title.

But O'Neill will be battling for attention Thursday with Ato Bolden, Frankie Fredericks and Obadele Thompson who will dispute the 100m final.

Trinidad's Boldon, the fastest man in the world this year, complained that his rivals were not pushing him hard enough.

"I'm surprised because the other guys aren't running fast, particularly Frankie and that's worrying for me," said the dual Olympic medallist, who clocked 10.05sec in his second round heat.

"I'm also starting to have my doubts about the track," added Boldon who had been widely predicting that Donovan Bailey's world record of 9.84sec would fall in Kuala Lumpur.

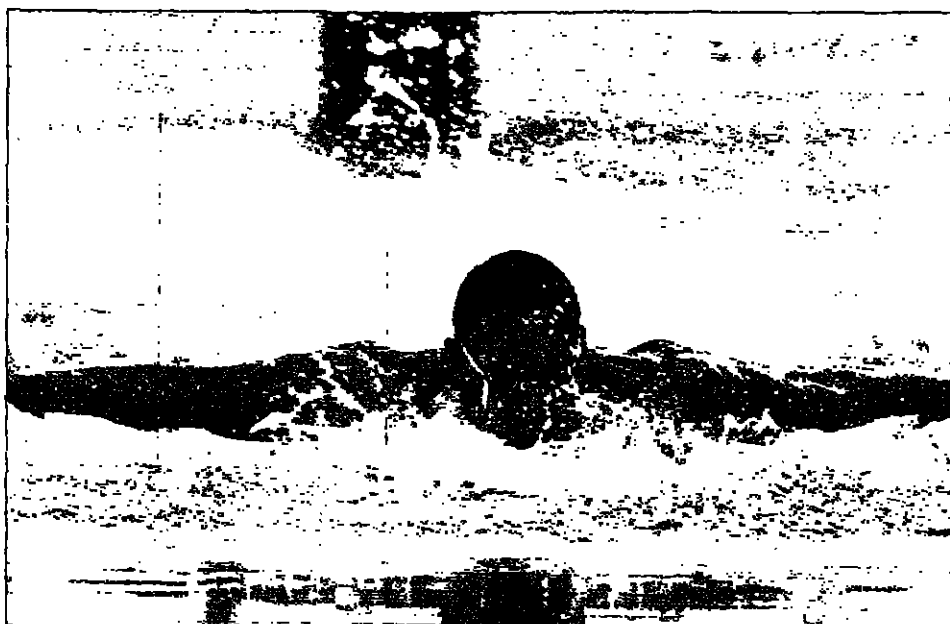
Fredericks looked uncomfortable as he came through in 10.15sec. Thompson cruised through in 10.09sec.

Australia took their gold medal total to 40 with a major boost from the gymnastics squad. Canada have 12 golds and England 10 after six days of competition among the 4,500 athletes from 70 nations.

Andrei Kravtsov, who only moved to Australia six years ago, took the men's parallel bars, pommel horse and floor exercise while Pavel Mamine won the men's rings. For Australia's women Trudy McIntosh took the balance beam title and Lisa Skinner the uneven bars.

England got two golds, through Lisa Mason in the vault and Annaika Reed in the floor exercise.

South Africa and Canada took the other two men's golds. Alexander Jeltkov won the high bar while South Africa's Simon



Australian swimmer Geoffrey Huegill

Hutcheon took the vault.

South Africa's Hester Bekker, 57, became the oldest gold winner at the Games when she claimed back-to-back titles in the

lawn bowls women's fours. South Africa beat Australia 17-16 in the final. Nauru's Marcus Stephen took his personal tally to seven golds with a clean

sweep of weightlifting's 62kg class. Indian got golds through Dharmaraj Wilson in the 56kg class clean and jerk. Arumugam Pandian, a 22-year-old railway worker, lifted the combined gold medal.

Michael Gault and Nick Baxter used their second shooting triumph to press the British government to ease stringent gun laws imposed after the 1996 Dunblane school massacre. Gault said the English pair had to defy the odds because British weapons laws rushed through after the killing of 16 children and their teacher were some of the toughest in the world.

Canada's Michel Dion and Wayne Sorensen won the men's pairs free rifle.

In squash, Scotland's world number one Peter Nicol beat arch-rival Jonathon Power of Canada 2-9, 9-2, 9-1, 2-9, 9-2 in the men's final.

South Africa reached the cricket final after last-wicket pair of Nicky Boje and Alan Dawson saw them past Sri Lanka's modest total of 130.



Ato Boldon (front) of Trinidad & Tobago runs past the pack in his 2nd round heat in the men's 100m Wednesday at the XVI Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur. Boldon qualified for the quarter-finals by post his fastest time of the season at 10.05sec (AFP photo)

7th round Speed Test kicks off Friday

By Roufan Nahhas

AMMAN — The 7th round of the Pepsi Speed Test kicks off Friday with 30 drivers taking part one of Kingdom's most popular event.

Veteran drivers Hassan and Tarek Tabaa' will be back on the track after a long absence from the rally scene.

"We are happy that these two experienced drivers will participate in the event which will give it a special flavour," Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ) spokesman Bader Rasheed told the Jordan Times.

Unlike recent rallies, women will have a place in

the event, according to Rasheed.

"Abeer and Sawasn Batikhi and Maya Mufti will be there to give it more excitement," Rasheed said.

"Mufti took part in most RACJ speed tests and now she is back for more," Rasheed added.

She also raced in Rally de Liban last May and broke the women's record at the 1998 Ruman Hill climb.

Khatchik Shadian champion of round five of the speed test will face tough competition from Yasser Jarrar and the Tabaa' brothers.

The speed test consists of two rounds and one special round for the best 10 dri-

vers.

According to speed test regulations, competitors will be provided with a map of the route one day before the event and will be allowed to walk through the course since pre-trials are not allowed.

Results of the rally will be added to the Jordan Open National Championship for 1998 Drivers and Jordan Open National Speed Test/Ruman Championship for 1998 Drivers.

Prizes and trophies will be presented to the winners in a special ceremony at RACJ premises.

McGwire hits 63rd home run

ST. LOUIS (AP) — It took Mark McGwire only one at-bat to regain the lead in the North American major league home-run derby.

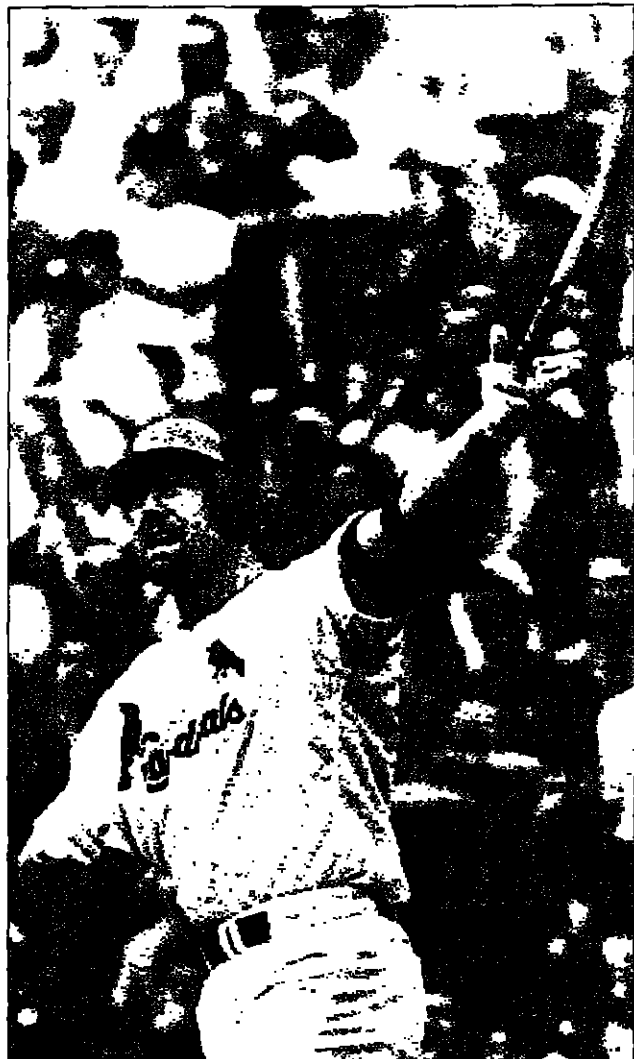
McGwire, pinch-hitting in the ninth inning, hit his 63rd home run Tuesday night to move ahead of Sammy Sosa in the great race.

He ended a six-game homer drought with a solo shot off Pittsburgh reliever Jason Christiansen in St. Louis' 8-6 loss to the Pirates in the first game of a doubleheader.

"He's been doing it for a year and two months, people cheering 'C'mon Mark, we want you to hit one,' Cardinals manager Tony La Russa said. "Boom, he hits one! How does he do it? I have no idea, except that he's remarkable."

The Cardinals' slugger did not start the opener as a precaution for his ailing back, and to allow more fans a chance to see him play. The games were sold out, but only about 10,000 fans were watching when the first game began.

The ballpark was filled and everyone was standing



Mark McGwire

when McGwire, baring for leadoff hitter Delino De. Shields, made his third pinch-hit appearance of the season with one out and nobody on in the ninth. On a 1-0 fastball that was down and in, he hit a towering drive measured at (117 metres) into the bleachers in left-centre field for his sixth career pinch-hit homer.

It was a gratuitous

appearance given the Cardinals were down three runs, but La Russa said this was a special case. He would have liked to have had McGwire hit for reliever Jeff Brantley, who was up fifth that inning, but didn't know if it would last that long.

"You sit around and wait for that, you may not get there," La Russa said. "I gave him a shot."

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Invitation to Tender No. 5/98

The Agricultural Marketing and Processing Company of Jordan (AMPCO) announces the Tender No. 5/98 that includes:

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- required quantity = six million caps (6 million caps).

Second: Easy open caps for 410 gm cans.
- required quantity = two million caps (2 million caps).

Copies of the Tender Documents can be obtained for the non-refundable price of JD50 (i.e. USD71.5) from the secretary of the tender committee at AMPCO head office:
Abdoun — M. Ali Janah Str.,
Tel.: 5932161 - Fax: 5929164

During working hours (8:00 a.m. to (2:00 p.m.) Tender should be submitted to the head of the tender committee at AMPCO, before October 8, 1998 (2:00 p.m. local time).

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Fax: 5929164-Tlx: 23796 AMPCO - Tel: 5932161
General Manager

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Israeli forces on Wednesday arrest Palestinian farmer Ata Jaber, 37, after demolishing his house for the second time in a month, north of Hebron, only days after also ripping up his orchard (AFP photo)

Israeli army pursues demolition campaign against Hebron farmer

HEBRON (AFP) — Israel's army pursued its relentless campaign against Hebron farmer Ata Jaber on Wednesday, demolishing his house for the second time in a month, just six days after ripping up his orchard.

Jaber, 37, was arrested as he argued with the soldiers guarding the bulldozer that tore down his house on a plot of land north of Hebron near a special road build for Jewish settlers in the area, witnesses said.

The Jaber family had rebuilt the structure after it

was torn down a first time last month by the army on the grounds it had been built without authorisation from the Israeli occupation authorities.

Last week the army ripped up a 2.5 acre orchard of fruit trees the Jaber had tended for years, well before the settler road was built.

"This is barbaric, savage, and I call on Ross to come here and see what kind of peace Israel is talking about," Jaber told reporters at the time, referring to U.S. peace envoy Dennis Ross, who has

been mediating in the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Peter Lerner, spokesman for Israel's military administration in the West Bank, said Jaber's home and orchard of olive, fig, almond and apple trees were destroyed because they were illegally placed on "state-owned land."

But Lerner acknowledged that the orchard was not new and could not explain why the army suddenly decided to destroy the trees.

The Israeli army often targets for demolition homes

built without formal authorisation near either the bypass roads or the 144 Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

Palestinians complain the military rarely grants them permission to build new houses or expand existing homes in the three-quarters of the West Bank still under full Israeli control.

Israel has declared wide swathes of the territory "state-owned land" when families cannot provide deeds proving the land is theirs, even if they have cultivated the plots for generations.

Arafat appeals for support for Palestinian state

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat appealed for Arab and international support here on Wednesday to help counter any attempt by Israel to foil his plans to declare a Palestinian state in May of next year.

Arafat issued his appeal at the start of a two-day Arab League conference expected to call for international sanctions on Israel for dragging its feet in the peace process and an end to the U.N.-imposed six-year sanctions on Libya.

"We badly need the support of our [Arab and Muslim] nation to allow us to achieve the project of the creation of our independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, on May 4, 1999," Arafat said.

"This announcement will undoubtedly receive your respect, your support and the support of all our friends in the world," Arafat told foreign ministers and delegates of the 22-member pan-Arab body.

The Palestinian leadership wanted "to secure international support for the Palestinian state once it is declared," Arafat said, stressing that he will also seek the support of "peace-loving" forces in Israel.

World-wide back up was needed, Arafat said, to foil plans by the Israeli army "to invade Palestinian self-rule areas" once a Palestinian state is declared.

Key Arafat aide Nabil Shaath told reporters meanwhile the Palestinians were ready to take up arms to fend off any attempt by Israel to crush their efforts to declare an independent state next year.

"If Israel declares war on us when we announce the creation of our state we will fight and we will resist," said Shaath, planning and international cooperation minister in Arafat's Palestinian National Authority.

"We have informed Washington officially that we will declare our state on May 4 and they have not commented, not positively, not negatively, and they did not ask us to delay," Shaath said.

"We are very confident that the European Union will recognise our state," he added.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa and Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid kicked off the conference with harsh words for Israel and Turkey who are linked by a military pact and urged Ankara to reconsider its cooperation with Israel.

"The peace process which was launched in Madrid has lost its credibility because of the policies of Israel," said Sharaa, who presides over the 110th ministerial conference of the Arab League.

Israel's military alliance with Turkey aimed to "eliminate the peace process," he said.

"Israel's ambitions are not a surprise but Turkey's military cooperation with Israel is sounding alarm bells for Arabs and Muslims who refuse alliances and are determined to make the region free of any threat," Sharaa said.

The two countries have been linked by a military cooperation accord since February 1996.

Abdul Meguid urged Arab countries to close ranks and take "decisive measures against Israel" in a bid to secure peace and stability in the region.

Both Sharaa and Abdul Meguid also backed Libya's demand for guarantees ahead of the extradition to the Netherlands of two Libyan suspects accused of bombing a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 killing 270 people.

The United States and Britain agreed in August to let the pair be tried in the Netherlands by Scottish judges and under Scottish law after insisting for years that they should be handed over to Washington or London.

Arab leaders held closed-door discussions of a 38-point agenda that includes the disputes opposing Libya, Iraq and Sudan and the West and efforts to lift U.N. sanctions imposed on all three member states.

Diplomats said Turkey's alliance with Israel topped the talks.

Taleban chief urges Iran to resolve tensions peacefully

KABUL (AFP) — Taleban supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar on Wednesday called on Iran to resolve their differences peacefully after Tehran ordered its forces to prepare for action against the hardline Islamist militia.

"Iran should solve its problem with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in accordance with the international law," Omar said in a statement over state-run Radio Shariat.

"In case the authorities of Iran are not ready to settle the issue with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan according to international law, the United Nations should blame Iran."

Omar's statement came after Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordered tens of thousands of his soldiers on Afghanistan's western borders to be prepared for action against the Taleban.

Tensions between the Sunni Muslim militia and Shiite Muslim Iran have mounted since the killings of nine Iranian diplomats and a journalist during the capture of the northern opposition stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif last month.

"We have human, Islamic, political and national concerns in Afghanistan — that is to protect our national interests and thwart a threat to the country and the nation," Khamenei told the commander of the elite Revolutionary Guards on Tuesday.

"All officials and armed forces should be prepared to firmly and in a timely manner carry out whatever plans and correct decisions the [top] officials have made for the interest of the country," Khamenei said.

A Taleban spokesman immediately hit back, warning that any Iranian attack would be dealt with in kind.

"We shall target Iranian cities if our territory is attacked," Taleban spokesman Wakil Ahmad was quoted by the Afghan Islamic Press as saying.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, the Taleban's main backer, had offered to act as a mediator to ease the tensions, Iran's official news agency IRNA reported.

In a message on Tuesday to Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, Sharif urged both "Iran and Afghanistan to take steps to remove the current tension and show restraint, mutual understanding and seek reconciliation and cooperation."

"This is fundamental to the region's peace and stability as well as Islamic solidarity in the long run," he added. "Pakistan is ready to expedite this process in anyway our Iranian and Afghan brothers wish."

News of the offer came as several hundred Tehran students rallied against the Taleban and Pakistan.

They shouted "death to the Taleban... Shame on Nawaz Sharif," witnesses said.

U.N. sources meanwhile said Wednesday that anti-Taleban forces had staged a series of counter-attacks around Bamian City in central Afghanistan and had recaptured the local airstrip.

One U.N. source said Bamian City was now divided between pro-Iranian Hazara forces and the Taliban.

Omar's softly worded statement on Wednesday did not contain any threats to Iran about consequences of an attack.

The Taleban radio, however, criticised the United Nations for allegedly ignoring repeated calls for intervention to defuse the tension.

"The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has more than once officially asked the United Nations, but it has paid no heed to our demands," the broadcast said.

Radio Shariat stressed the need for good neighbourly relations between the two countries and to defuse the present tension.

The radio in its main commentary last Tuesday termed Iran "a neighbouring Muslim country having friendly ties and common cultural bonds with Afghanistan throughout history" based on mutual trust.

U.N. envoy holds talks in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (R) — The U.N. envoy in Iraq is holding talks with the country's leaders in the hope of averting a new confrontation over Iraq's refusal to allow weapons inspectors to operate, diplomats based in Baghdad said.

They said Prakash Shah, the U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan's special envoy, had called off a visit to northern Iraq scheduled this week in order to pursue "quiet diplomacy" with Iraqi officials.

"He is pursuing quiet

diplomacy with Iraqis to persuade them to rescind their decision of Aug. 5 which halted cooperation with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM)," one diplomat said.

Annan appointed Shah to the post in March to supervise an agreement the U.N. chief clinched with Iraq following a crisis over visits to so-called presidential sites by U.N. weapons inspectors.

Last month Shah failed to convince Iraqi leaders to change their decision to sus-

pend cooperation with weapons inspectors of UNSCOM, whose task is to search for weapons of mass destruction or production facilities, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which monitors nuclear sites.

In response, the Security Council issued a resolution last Wednesday which suspended its regular reviews of sanctions against Baghdad but called for a "comprehensive review" of sanctions if it resumed cooperation.

Turkish forces kill 53 Kurd rebels

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Security forces killed 53 Kurdish rebels in a four-day offensive close to the Iraqi border that ended on Wednesday, regional authorities overseeing emergency rule in southeastern Turkey said.

Thousands of troops and special forces teams, backed by air power, combed a mountainous area called Farasin in the southeastern Hakkari province in pursuit of PKK guerrillas.

The statement from authorities in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir made no mention of any military casualties during the operation, conducted within kilometres of Turkey's border with the Kurdish enclave of northern Iraq.

Netanyahu marks 20th anniversary of Camp David peace accords with protest

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu marked the 20th anniversary of Israel's Camp David peace accords with Egypt by issuing a protest Wednesday over "anti-Semitism" in the official Egyptian press.

In an edition of the "Prime Minister's Report," an occasional publication of Netanyahu's office, he charged that Egypt is violating the terms of the peace treaty resulting from the Sept. 17, 1979 accords by publishing "anti-Semitic" articles and cartoons as well as denials of the Holocaust.

"Despite two decades of peace, anti-Semitic themes permeate the official Egyptian media," the report said.

"The official Egyptian media repeatedly questions the extent of the Holocaust and accuses Jews of inflating the number of victims to pressure Western countries," it said.

The report included numerous citations from official Egyptian newspapers referring to Jews as "swindlers" and "tricksters" and political cartoons depicting Israel with "ugly Jew" stereotypes once used in Nazi propaganda.

In one cartoon from the February 28 issue of the Al Gumburiya daily, Israel is portrayed as a fat, ultra-Orthodox Jew slouched against a nuclear bomb with the word "racism" written across his clothes.

Other cartoons show Hitler hiding behind a Netanyahu mask and Netanyahu dressed as a Nazi officer banging a drum with sticks tipped with human skulls.

It also cites an article in the August 24 issue of the weekly Roz Al Yusu' in which Israel is accused of contaminating blood supplies destined for Arab countries with the AIDS virus, hepatitis and bilharzia.

The report said such refer-

ences in the official Egyptian press violate a clause in the Camp David accords stating that Israel and Egypt "shall seek to foster mutual understanding and tolerance and will accordingly abstain from hostile propaganda against each other."

Netanyahu's anniversary report makes no mention of other aspects of the Camp David accords, the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab state, or of the relatively good relations enjoyed by the two nations over the past 20 years.

The agreement was reached in Washington following intensive negotiations at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland between Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and U.S. leader Jimmy Carter.

The accord led Israel to withdraw from the Sinai peninsula it had occupied since the 1967 war. For signing the deal, Sadat was assassinated in 1981 by Islamic militants.

Israeli-Egyptian relations have deteriorated steadily since Netanyahu's coalition of nationalist and religious parties came to power in mid-1996 and slowed implementation of peace accords with the Palestinians.

Israeli officials have recently accused Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak of encouraging Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to take a hardline in negotiations on further Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank.

The negotiations have been stalled for 18 months.

Last week Netanyahu dispatched a top aide to ask Mubarak for help in pressing Arafat to accept changes to a compromise troop withdrawal package drawn up by the United States. Egypt refused.



Boys receive reward for honesty

EL PASO (R) — Two young brothers aged five and eight found more than \$23,000 in a shopping mall bathroom but handed the cash to police saying they couldn't keep it. Seth and Sam Brown found a bank deposit bag containing \$23,399 and dozens of checks inside a mall bathroom in the southwest Texas city of El Paso. The brothers told their parents about the find and handed it to police, who then traced the checks to a local construction contractor.

"He was very happy that they were honest kids," police spokeswoman Linda Oliveira said. The boys received a reward for their honesty, but declined to say how big.

'You get no salary nor promotion, and you may not marry'

TILBURG (AP) — Wanted: Young men with a calling. Job requirements: celibacy, compassion and charity. Salary: none. A Dutch order of Roman Catholic friars launched a nationwide recruitment drive this week to attract new brothers as old age takes its toll on their ranks. "We are looking for people [male] with a heart who have the courage to become a friar," proclaimed a newspaper advertisement that ran in national and regional newspapers Saturday. "We have a pile of disadvantages to report," the advertisement continued. "You get no salary, no promotion, and you may not marry."

Al Fayed thinks his life is interesting

LONDON (AP) — Mohammad Al Fayed, owner of the department store Harrods, thinks his life is interesting. Just look on his Web site. The new site — www.alfayed.com — says it is dedicated to carrying a "comprehensive database of newspaper articles relating to Al Fayed's interesting life." The site includes a large section of stories related to the car crash last year in Paris that killed his son, Dodi, and Princess Diana. A website section under construction will contain three sub-headings about the couple: "The Love Affair," "August 31" and "Unanswered Questions."

Pig, a huge celebrity at New Mexico State Fair

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — A pig as big as a small car is a huge celebrity at the New Mexico State Fair. Harley, a 476-kilo Yorkshire hog, is delighting the crowds even though he spends most of his day snoring. Even congressional candidates are awestruck by him. "Dang, that thing's huge," Democratic hopeful Phil Maloof said on a recent visit. Harley is 2.44 metres long and 1.22 metres tall, with a snout the size of a salad plate. For 30 cents, fairgoers get to see the porker laying on a wooden platform tucked among the horse and cow barns at the fairgrounds.

Mexican singer relieved kidnappers free brother

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican singer Alejandro Fernandez is relieved and thankful that kidnappers freed his older brother after the family paid a \$3.2 million ransom, a Mexico City daily said Tuesday. The Fernandez family, led by Mexico's celebrated ranchero singer Vicente Fernandez, has been reluctant to comment on the four-month-long kidnapping of Vicente Fernandez Jr. which ended last week. "Thanks to God, everything ended well and we were able to be reunited as a family," Alejandro Fernandez told the Reforma newspaper.

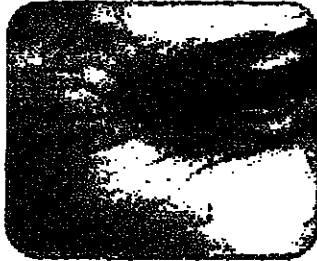
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